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# Secretary of State Marco Rubio Remarks to Press

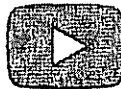
REMARKS

MARCO RUBIO, SECRETARY OF STATE

SHANNON, IRELAND

MARCH 12, 2025

## Secretary Rubio's remarks to the press



**SECRETARY RUBIO:** All right, who's got a question?

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**QUESTION:** I do.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** I knew you would have a question.

**QUESTION:** So – Michael Gordon, *Wall Street Journal*. Sir, the Russians are still making gains on the battlefield. There's been no public response to the developments in Jeddah. Are you concerned they're playing for time? Have you had any contact with them? What's been their response officially and are they willing to accept the ceasefire unconditionally?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, I mean, we don't know the answer to the last question. That's what we want to know, whether they're prepared to do it unconditionally. We'll have contact with them today. There's already been contacts at different levels with counterparts, different members of the administration, and that'll continue. But as far as the Russian reaction to it, that's really the question here, and that is – this is a few hours old. We're going to bring it to them directly. We're going to say that Ukraine is prepared to stop all battlefield activity and begin the immediate process of negotiating an enduring end to the war, and we'll see what their response is.

If their response is yes, then we know we've made real progress and there's a real chance of peace. If their response is no, it'll be highly unfortunate, and it'd make their intentions clear. So that's what we're hoping to hear from them, and obviously, as I said, this was not pre-arranged with them, so they're – they're probably processing the news the same as the rest of the world. And so we hope to have a positive answer from them. The ball is truly in their court.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary —

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary, Nike Ching with Voice of America. What would be a good G7 joint statement on Russia and on China?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, I think the perfect statement would be that the United States has done a good thing for the world in bringing this process forward, and now we all eagerly await and – the Russian response and urge them strongly to consider ending all hostilities so people will stop dying, so bullets will stop flying, and so a process can begin to find a permanent peace. I think the first step in all this is the acceptance that there is no military solution to this conflict. Neither side can militarily achieve their maximalist gains – their maximalist goals. I mean, they're just not going to achieve them through the military side. The only way this conflict can end is through negotiation. That's the only way you're going to have peace is through negotiation.

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And so we need to start that process. And it is hard to start a process when people are shooting at each other and people are dying. And so our hope is that we can stop that, all these hostilities, and get to a negotiating table where both sides – over some period of time with a lot of hard work – can find a mutually acceptable outcome that, in the case of Ukraine, obviously secures their long-term prosperity and security.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary, could you just update us on Mr. Witkoff's plans for Moscow and whether he'll be meeting with President Putin?

And then separately, if you wouldn't mind elaborating on something that Mr. Waltz said yesterday about the specifics that you discussed with Ukrainians about what the end of the war would look like, you had mentioned we're not going to get maps out and draw lines, but did you actually talk about territorial concessions?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, we – we had conversations. As far as Steve's trip, I'm not here to – I can't – I'm not going to make any announcements about specific dates, times, or even confirm such a trip. Suffice it to say there is going to be multiple points of contact with the Russians to gauge are they willing to do this or not. And as far as the conversations that were yesterday, yeah – when you sit down with a counterpart like Ukraine, we're not going to negotiate this publicly, we're not going to actually put out there sort of what we talked about, because in any negotiation there's certainly an element where you don't want one side to be giving away all of this leverage from a public perspective. We had a broad conversation about what it would – but I think the bulk of our conversation was what a negotiation process would look like in terms of not the specific conditions, but rather the timing of it, sort of the steps they would like to see taken.

The Ukrainians made very clear that this isn't just about ending a war. They need to get their prisoners of war back; they need to get the children back. They'd like to see an exchange of prisoners of war; they'd like to see their children back. So there's all sorts of things tied to the, humanitarian assistance is important as well. There are areas of Ukraine that have been badly damaged that require immediate assistance. So these are the sorts of things that we talked about as being inclusive in the negotiation process.

So really the bulk of our conversation, when we got to that stage of it, was discussing the kinds of items that need to be on a negotiation agenda if and when we hopefully get there.

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**QUESTION:** He also mentioned security guarantees, which is something that there has been some reluctance for the administration to elaborate on. Have - are you committing to security —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, I think the point - no - the point to understand is that we're looking at securing their long-term - what we want to see - like any country in the world, Ukraine wants their long-term security. They want to make sure that this doesn't happen again. We all do. What is the point of spending all this time to get a ceasefire hopefully and then a negotiated end to the war only to see it re-spark up again in about six years, four years, three years? No one's - we're not interested in that, and they certainly aren't, either.

So I think the question really is more about a deterrence. Can Ukraine create a sufficient deterrent against future aggression, against future attack, against future invasion? Because every country in the world has a right to defend themselves, and no one can dispute that. So that will most certainly have to be part of the conversation. But again, I don't think there's - there isn't a peace to secure until you have a peace.

**QUESTION:** Not just - not —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** There's no way to have an enduring peace without the deterrence piece being a part of it.

**QUESTION:** Can I just follow up on that particular point?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** Because the joint statement talks about European partners being involved in the peace process, but that's only attributed to the Ukrainian delegation. There doesn't appear to be U.S. support for that line —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, I think what it says in the statement is that they raised the need for the Europeans. But I have already said publicly the Europeans have issued a series of sanctions against the Russian Federation, and I would imagine that in any negotiation - if we get there, hopefully - with the Russians that they will raise these European - the European sanctions that have been imposed upon them. So I think that the issue of European sanctions are going to be on the table —

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**QUESTION:** But it —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** — not to mention what happens with the frozen assets and the like. And so I think it's self-evident that for there to be a peace in Ukraine, at the end of that process there is going to have to be some decision by the Europeans about what they are going to do with these sanctions and so forth. And so that's why I think they have to be necessarily involved in this regard. Now, whether they're involved at the front end of it or at the back end of it, it'll have to play itself out. And then obviously there is also all sorts of security promises that European countries have made to Ukraine, that that will also be, I imagine, a part of this conversation as we move forward.

**QUESTION:** But —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** So we don't disagree with that statement. I think the statement just reflects that they raised it.

**QUESTION:** But do you back European peacekeepers in Ukraine, which is something Russia has categorically —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, we'll see. I mean, there's different ways to — there's different ways to construct a deterrent on the ground that prevents another war from starting in the future. We're not going to go in with any sort of preconceived notion. The bottom line is it needs to be something that makes Ukraine feel as if they can deter and prevent a future invasion. How that looks and how that's put together, that's what we're going to be talking about, if we can get to that stage.

Again, right now we're just trying to get to the stage where there's actual diplomacy happening. Here's what we'd like the world to look like in a few days: neither side is shooting at each other, not rockets, not missiles, not bullets, nothing, not artillery. The shooting stops, the fighting stops, and the talking starts. That's what we want to see. What happens during that talking and how that evolves, I think we're going to have to be flexible and nimble and creative and patient and work hard at it and hopefully turn it into something that's concrete.

You've covered — many of you have covered foreign policy for years. That's how these things happen, and they're not easy, and sometimes they're difficult to predict which way they're going to go in terms of the specifics of it. But we just want to get to that stage. That would be, for lack

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of a better term, a good problem to have, to have to figure out how to negotiate a peace because we're actually negotiating a peace while the shooting has stopped.

**QUESTION:** Is the mineral deal essentially the security guarantee that you guys envisioned?

And then a second question is: President Trump appealed to a lot of Americans during his campaign on free speech arguments and not suppressing speech, especially from the government, but your revocation of the green card to many is seen as one of the most anti-speech actions a secretary can take with his powers. How do you respond?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, I mean, the first question was again the —

**QUESTION:** Is the minerals deal a version of the security guarantee?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** The minerals deal, yeah. Well, I think that a minerals deal is something that I think is beneficial for both countries. Certainly one of the things that provides for Ukraine's long-term prosperity and security is vibrant economic growth and development. If their GDP is — begins to grow and — that gives them a tremendous amount of leverage and power and the ability to fund their own defenses. So I think certainly any economic development for Ukraine is positive for their own future.

Obviously if the United States has a vested economic interest somewhere, we're tied to them on an economic front, we're in partnership with them on something, we will have an interest in the future of Ukraine as well. I wouldn't couch it as a security guarantee, but certainly if the United States has a vested economic interest that's generating revenue for our people as well as for the people of Ukraine, we'd have a vested interest in protecting it if it were to be challenged or threatened.

On your first point, when you enter the — this is an important point, and I'm glad you asked this question. When you come to the United States as a visitor — which is what a visa is, which is how this individual entered this country, on a visitor's visa, okay — you are here as a visitor. We can deny you that visa. We can deny you that — if you tell us when you apply, "Hi, I'm trying to get into the United States on a student visa, I am a big supporter of Hamas, a murderous, barbaric group that kidnaps children, that rapes teenage girls, that takes hostages, that allows them to die in captivity, that returns more bodies than live hostages" — if you tell us that you are in favor of a group like this, and if you tell us when you apply for your visa, "And by the way, I intend to come

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to your country as a student and rile up all kinds of anti-Jewish student, anti-Semitic activities, I intend to shut down your universities" – if you told us all these things when you applied for a visa, we would deny your visa. I hope we would. If you actually end up doing that once you're in this country on such a visa, we will revoke it. And if you end up having a green card – not citizenship but a green card – as a result of that visa while you're here and those activities, we're going to kick you out. It's as simple as that.

This is not about free speech. This is about people that don't have a right to be in the United States to begin with. No one has a right to a student visa. No one has a right to a green card, by the way. So when you apply for a student visa or any visa to enter the United States, we have a right to deny you for virtually any reason, but I think being a supporter of Hamas and coming into our universities and turning them upside down and being complicit in what are clearly crimes of vandalism, complicit in shutting down learning institutions – there are kids at these schools that can't go to class. You pay all this money to these high-priced schools that are supposed to be of great esteem and you can't even go to class, you're afraid to go to class because these lunatics are running around with covers on their face, screaming terrifying things. If you told us that's what you intended to do when you came to America, we would have never let you in. And if you do it once you get in, we're going to revoke it and kick you out.

**QUESTION:** Can I ask you about the Canada trip coming up? The President has taunted, if you will, Canada, calling it the 51st state, calling Prime Minister Trudeau the governor —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, he said it should become the 51st state from an economic standpoint. He says if they became the 51st state, we wouldn't have to worry about the border and fentanyl coming across because now we would be able to manage that. He's made an argument that it's their interest to do so. Obviously the Canadians don't agree, apparently, but —

**QUESTION:** Do you agree with it? Should there be – are you going to discuss that, becoming the 51st —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, that's not what we're going to discuss at the G7, and that's not what we're going to be discussing in our trip here. So it – they are the host nation, and I – I mean, we have a lot of other things we work on together. We defend North America through NORAD and the airspace of our continent together, so – not to mention the issues of Ukraine and other

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commonalities. So we're going to be focused in the G7 on all of those things. That's what the meeting is about. It is not a meeting about how we're going to take over Canada.

**QUESTION:** But more broadly —

**QUESTION:** But are you concerned at all about the reception that you might be getting, particularly at the event?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** I don't know, should I be? What do you know that I don't know?

**QUESTION:** They're unhappy.

**QUESTION:** I don't know, you've got the tariffs in the last 12 hours, you've just seen this escalating trade war – not just with Canada but, with the exception of Japan, all the other members of the G7.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, so what's your point?

**QUESTION:** Well —

**QUESTION:** Are you worried about alienating the Canadians, that they wouldn't work with the United States?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, I mean, they've invited us to come. We intend to go. The alternative is to not go. I think that would actually make things worse, not better. So – it's a G7 summit.

**QUESTION:** One alternative could be not to —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Huh?

**QUESTION:** The alternative could be not to have tariffs or not to have the language that the President —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, those are policy decisions. And so at the end of the day, the President's made those decisions. He's explained why. It's not just against Canada, it's not just against Mexico, it's not just against G7 countries. He's imposed steel and aluminum tariffs now on

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virtually the entire world, and the reason why is not to punish those countries; it's because he has outlined the need to develop a domestic capability. If you don't have steel and aluminum, you can't build warships, you can't build airplanes, and you are not an industrial economy. There are things we have to be able to protect and there's a lot of unfair trade practices, a lot of countries out there who subsidize their industries so that they can gain global market share, so they subsidize the industries, they're operating at a loss. Meanwhile, our industries are trying to compete fairly, and that's why you don't have steel plants and that's why you can't produce the aluminum. And that really threatens our national security in the long term.

So these are national security concerns when it comes to steel and aluminum and some of these other products. But ultimately the President feels strongly – and I personally agree – that we have made some decisions when it comes to trade policies that have led to the de-industrialization of America and have left us deeply vulnerable to any sort of interruptions in global supplies and/or it being used to extort us, not to mention our inability to produce things that we need for our own economy and for our own defense.

So that's what those policies are about. Every country in the world we expect will act in their national interest. The United States forgot that. President Trump is reminding us of that and getting us back to that, and I think it is quite possible that we could do these things and at the same time deal in a constructive way with our allies and friends and partners on all the other issues that we work together on. And that's what I expect out of the G7 and Canada.

**QUESTION:** Can I just ask on Russia? Did you have – or Waltz – have any contact with Zelenskyy while you were in Saudi Arabia? And then —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, I didn't. I don't believe Mr. Waltz did either, but I did not. But that was the team he selected, and it was appropriate. It was his closest advisor, it was their foreign minister, it was their head of security. So we felt that that was the counterparts they sent and to deal with us, and that's obviously pretty common in these sorts of things. Generally the heads of state meet heads of state and appropriate counterparts meet others. He – I imagine he had to get back, and he's – he – the president of a wartime country, so he's – but we did not have any contact with him there. But I wouldn't read – read anything into it other than he selected his team for these talks and the President selected his, so —

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**QUESTION:** And was there any discussion with the Ukrainians about how a ceasefire, if Russia agrees, would be enforced? How would the U.S. ensure parties —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, well, the interesting thing about modern warfare is there – it's easier than ever to monitor and – simply because there's so many eyes on the ground and there's also all sorts of overhead commercial satellite and the like. It would be pretty hard to hide drone strikes, it would be hard to hide missile strikes, ballistic strikes, artillery. So we feel like that is something that could be monitored. Obviously, if in fact the Russians say yes – let's hope they say yes. If they say yes, one of the things we'll have to determine is who do both sides trust to be on the ground to sort of monitor some of the small arms fires and exchanges that could happen. But those are practices that have become common in these, and I don't think that would be difficult to set up. We didn't get into specifics, but obviously the need to monitor a ceasefire is clear to everyone.

**QUESTION:** Sir, just a quick follow-up on this question.

**QUESTION:** Can I get a last question? Last question?

**MS BRUCE:** One more question. One more. This is it.

**QUESTION:** The —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, because we're fueling up and have to get back on the plane.

**MS BRUCE:** Right.

**QUESTION:** Last question, sir.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, yeah.

**QUESTION:** The – you haven't – this administration has not hesitated to put a lot of pressure on Ukraine. You reduced their intelligence support in the middle of a shooting war, you temporarily cut off their arms, criticized them publicly – not you, but leadership in public. Are you truly prepared to apply pressure on Russia should it be recalcitrant and not agree to the terms of the ceasefire? There's no been no concrete action that this administration has taken to punish Russia since it's come to office.

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**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, a couple points. To be clear, as far as I am aware, the United States has not provided armaments to Russia. The United States is not providing assistance to Russia. Every single sanction that has been imposed on Russia remains in place. Every single sanction the President inherited has – remains in place.

**QUESTION:** Trump inherited, previous administration.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Right, but – well, I mean, they're pretty sanctioned up. I mean, there's a lot of sanctions on already. So my point being is that we've – there's been no steps taken to relieve any of these things. These things continue to be in place. But we don't think it's constructive for me to stand here today and begin to issue threats about what we're going to do if Russia says no. Let's hope they say yes.

At the end, let's understand. I remind everybody and bring you back to the point: The President's desire here is to bring about a lasting and enduring peace in Ukraine. He wants the shooting and the fighting to stop – not just for 30 days, not just for 60 days, but permanently. To do that, both sides have to come to the table. We are happy – we are happy that the Ukrainians have agreed to do so. Now it is up to Russia to say yes. If Russia says yes, that's very good news, and we will begin that process and do everything we can to move that process forward. If they say no, then obviously we'll have to examine everything and sort of figure out where we stand in the world and what their true intentions are. I think it'll be – if they say no, it'll tell us a lot about what their goals are and what their mindset is.

But I don't want to go into that before they've even answered us by issuing statements that are abrasive in any way. Our hope is that – when we met with them last, they expressed a willingness under the right conditions, without elaborating on the right conditions, to bring an end to this conflict. That was our question when we met with them. I think I shared it with you that were on our trip. The point of meeting with them was to find out is this a war they wanted to end or is this a war they just wanted to continue in perpetuity until they achieved whatever goals they have in mind, and they expressed a willingness, under the right circumstances, which they did not define, to bring an end to this conflict.

So we have Ukraine ready to come to the table. Now we need to get Russia to come to the table. If they do and the shooting stops, I think that's a very good day in the world. Obviously no one here is pretending that that negotiation's going to be easy or fast or simple, but at least we've

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gotten to that point. If their answer is no, then obviously we'll have to deal with that and we'll have to at that point make decisions on that basis. We're not there yet. Hopefully the answer is yes.

**MS BRUCE:** Thank you, everyone.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Okay, thanks, guys.

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Fox News, "JD Vance Reveals Whether More Deportations of Green Card Holders Are Coming" (Mar. 13, 2025), <https://www.foxnews.com/video/6369982152112>.

**TRANSCRIPT:**

**JD Vance:** Laura, a green card holder, even if I might like that green card holder doesn't have an indefinite right to be in the United States of America. Right? American citizens have different rights from people who have green cards, from people who have student visas. And so my attitude on this is: this is not fundamentally about free speech. And to me, yes, it's about national security, but it's also, more importantly, about who do we as an American public decide gets to join our national community? And if the Secretary of State and the President decide this person shouldn't be in America, and they have no legal right to stay here, it's as simple as that.

**Laura Ingraham:** Do you see more such deportations happening?

**JD Vance:** I think we'll certainly see some people who get deported on student visas if we determine that it's not in the best interest of the United States to have them in our country. So yeah, I don't know how high that number is going to be, but you're going to see more people.



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VIDEO: Columbia University Student Whose Visa Was Revoked for Supporting Hamas and Terrorist Activities Used CBP Home App ...



U.S. Department of Homeland Security

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## VIDEO: Columbia University Student Whose Visa Was Revoked for Supporting Hamas and Terrorist Activities Used CBP Home App to Self-Deport

Release Date: March 14, 2025

*Another student who supported Hamas was arrested by ICE HSI for overstaying her student visa.*

WASHINGTON – Today, Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem announced that one of the Columbia students who had her student visa revoked for advocating for violence and terrorism self-deported using the CBP Home App and ICE arrested a Palestinian student for overstaying her expired F-1 visa.

Ranjani Srinivasan, a citizen and national of India, entered the United States on a F-1 student visa as doctoral student in Urban Planning at Columbia University. Srinivasan was involved in activities supporting Hamas, a terrorist organization. The Department of Homeland Security has obtained [video footage \(https://x.com/Sec\\_Noem/status/1900562928849326488\)](https://x.com/Sec_Noem/status/1900562928849326488) of her using the CBP Home App to self-deport on March 11.

Another student Leqaa Kordia, a Palestinian from West Bank, was arrested by ICE HSI Newark officers for overstaying her expired F-1 student visa. Her visa terminated on January 26, 2022, for lack of attendance. Previously, in April 2024 Kordia was arrested for her involvement in pro-Hamas protests at Columbia University in New York City.

The below statement is attributable to Secretary Noem:

*"It is a privilege to be granted a visa to live and study in the United States of America. When you advocate for violence and terrorism that privilege should be revoked, and you should not be in this country. I am glad to see one of the Columbia University terrorist sympathizers use the CBP Home app to self-deport."*

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# Secretary of State Marco Rubio with Margaret Brennan of CBS's Face the Nation

INTERVIEW

MARCO RUBIO, SECRETARY OF STATE

MIAMI FLORIDA

MARCH 6, 2025

**QUESTION:** Let's get straight to it this morning with Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who joins us from Miami, Florida. Mr. Secretary, for our audience, just to explain, this Red Sea area is a really important transit point for global shipping. The Houthis out of Yemen have been disrupting transit there for some time. President Trump cited these concerns when he announced the strikes. I'm wondering, how long will this campaign last and will it involve ground forces?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, first of all, the problem here is that this is a very important shipping lane, and in the last year and a half, last 18 months, the Houthis have struck or attacked 174 naval vessels of the United States, attacking the U.S. Navy directly 174 times, and 145 times they've attacked commercial shipping. So we basically have a band of pirates with guided precision anti-ship weaponry, and exacting a toll system in one of the most important shipping lanes in the world. That's just not sustainable. We are not going to have these people controlling which ships can go through and which ones cannot. And so your question is how long will this go on. It will go on until they no longer have the capability t

SECRETARY OF STATE

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**QUESTION:** Well, what does U.S. intelligence tell us at this point? Because the U.S. had been conducting strikes for some time but has not stopped the Houthis.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No.

**QUESTION:** So what's going to be different right now? Do you have more fidelity in the intelligence that would make this more successful?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, those strikes were retaliation strikes. So they launched one missile, we hit the missile launcher, or we sent something to do it. This is not a message. This is not a one-off. This is an effort to deny them the ability to continue to constrict and control shipping, and it's just not going to happen. We're not going to have these guys, these people with weapons able to tell us where our ships can go – where the ships of all the world can go, by the way. It's not just the U.S. We're doing the world a favor.

**QUESTION:** Yeah.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** We're doing the entire world a favor by getting rid of these guys and their ability to strike global shipping. That's the mission here, and it will continue until that's carried out. That never happened before. The Biden administration didn't do that. All the Biden administration would do is they would respond to an attack. These guys would launch one rocket; we'd hit the rocket launcher. That's it.

This is an effort to take away their ability to control global shipping in that part of the world. That's just not going to happen anymore.

**QUESTION:** And it could –

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** So this will continue until that's finished.

**QUESTION:** It could involve ground raids?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, I – those are military decisions to be made, but I've heard no talk of ground raids. I don't think there's a necessity for it right now. I can tell you that as of last night, some of the key people involved in those missile launches are no longer with us, and I can tell you that some of the facilities that they used are no longer existing, and that will continue.

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Secretary of State Marco Rubio with Margaret Brennan of CBS's Face the Nation - United States Department of State

Look, it's bottom line – easy way to understand it, okay? These guys are able to control what ships can go through there. They've attacked the U.S. Navy.

**QUESTION:** Yeah.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** A hundred and seventy-four times they've attacked the United States Navy. We're not going to have people sitting around with the missiles, attacking the U.S. Navy. It's not going to happen – not under President Trump.

**QUESTION:** The President also referenced Iran in his statement. Iran provides some support for the Houthis, as you know. Put this in context for me, because U.S. intelligence has been suggesting for some time that Israel has the desire and intent to conduct an attack on Iran's developing nuclear program in the coming months. President Trump has extended an offer for negotiations. Have you heard anything back from Iran? Is this strike in Yemen a signal to Iran?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** This strike in Yemen is about their ability – the ability of the Houthis – to strike global shipping and attack the U.S. Navy, and their willingness to do it: 174 times against the U.S. Navy; 145-some times against global shipping. That's what the strike is about. What we can't ignore, and the reason why the President mentioned Iran, is because the Iranians have supported the Houthis. They've provided them intelligence. They've provided them guidance. They've provided them weaponry. I mean, there's no way the Houthis – okay, the Houthis – would have the ability to do this kind of thing unless they had support from Iran. And so this was a message to Iran: Don't keep supporting them, because then you will also be responsible for what they are doing in attacking Navy ships and attacking global shipping.

**QUESTION:** They also get support from Russia, potentially, which you leveraged sanctions in regard to. But I want to ask you about tariffs because you were just in Canada this past week. China is Canada's second-biggest export market; Mexico's third. In this ongoing trade back-and-forth the U.S. is having, isn't there a risk that China will ultimately be the winner? If it's too costly to deal with the United States, won't they benefit?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, actually, China and Canada are involved in a mini trade war right now. In fact, the Chinese have imposed a bunch of tariffs, reciprocal or retaliatory tariffs, on Canada after Canada imposed tariffs on them. So here's the way everyone needs to understand this, okay? The President rightfully believes that the balance of global trade is completely off-kilter. For 30 or 40 years, we have allowed countries to treat us unfairly in global trade, much of

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it during the Cold War because we wanted them to be rich and prosperous because they were our allies in the Cold War. But now that has to change. You look at the European Union. The European Union's economy is about the same size as ours. It's not a low-wage economy. It's very comparable to ours in terms of its composition and so forth. Why do they have a trade surplus with us?

So what the President is saying is two things. Number one, there are critical industries – like aluminum, like steel, like semiconductors, like automobile manufacturing – that he rightfully believes, President Trump rightfully believes, the U.S. needs to have a domestic capability, and the way you protect those industries and build that capability is by ensuring that there's economic incentives to produce in the United States.

The second is global, and that is, we are going to put tariffs on countries reciprocal to what they impose on us. And so this is global – it's not against Canada, it's not against Mexico, it's not against the EU; it's everybody. And then from that new baseline of fairness and reciprocity, we will engage, potentially, in bilateral negotiations with countries around the world on new trade arrangements that make sense for both sides – fairness. But right now it's not fair. We're going to reset the baseline and then we can enter into these bilateral agreements, potentially, with countries so that our trade is fair.

What's not going to continue is – of course these countries are upset.

**QUESTION:** So this is all just about leverage to get bilateral, not free – not North American free trade deals –

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, it's not leverage.

**QUESTION:** – renegotiation.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, no, it's not leverage. It's fairness. It's resetting baseline fairness. And then from there we can work on deals and so forth, because they'll have products we don't make, we have products they don't make. That's where trade works the best. It has to be free, but it has to be fair in that – and right now it's only free on one side and it's not fair for the other side.

**QUESTION:** Well, you know, sir, that –

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**SECRETARY RUBIO:** It's an unsustainable position.

**QUESTION:** – the ad hoc nature of these policy announcements and pullbacks are causing concern in the marketplace, as we saw this past week. So I heard you describe what seemed like a strategy to get to negotiations on a bilateral front. You also seemed to negotiate – say this was national security-minded. But then we also see –

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah.

**QUESTION:** – comments by the President of, like, 200 percent tariffs on champagne. That's not a critical industry for the United States. That seems more emotional.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, that – I mean, that's called retaliation. That's what happens in these trade exchanges. They're going to increase tariffs on – they already have high tariffs. They're going to add more to their tariffs? Fine. Then we'll have to find something to – I mean, you tell me. I mean, Canada is going after whiskey and orange juice and, I mean –

**QUESTION:** In retaliation.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Right, exactly. So that sounds pretty petty to me as well. So what's the difference? The point is – I get it. I understand why these countries don't like it, because the status quo of trade is good for them. It benefits them. They like the status quo. We don't like the status quo. We are going to set a new status quo and then we can negotiate something, if they want to, that is fair for both sides. But what we have now cannot continue. We have deindustrialized this country, okay, deindustrialized the United States of America. There are things we can no longer make, and we have to be able to make in order to be safe as a country and in order to have jobs. That's why we had a Rust Belt. That's why we have suffered all these important jobs that once sustained entire communities, wiped out by trade that basically sent these factories, these jobs, this industrial capability to other places. That cannot and will not continue. I don't –

**QUESTION:** Yeah.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** President Trump – this is no mystery; he's been talking about this since the 1980s, actually.

**QUESTION:** Yeah.

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**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Even before he was a political figure. This is going to happen and it's going to happen now.

**QUESTION:** I want to ask you about Russia. You said Envoy Steve Witkoff's meeting with Vladimir Putin that happened last week would answer the fundamental question of whether we're moving towards a ceasefire or whether Putin is using a delay tactic. You spoke with Sergei Lavrov, the foreign minister, yesterday. Is this a delay tactic?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, I think it was a promising meeting. As I've said repeatedly, we're not going to negotiate this in the public. Hopefully we'll have something to announce at some point fairly soon. I can't guarantee that, but I certainly think the meeting was promising, the exchange was promising. I don't take away from Steve's meeting, from Ambassador Witkoff's meeting, negativity. There are some challenges. This is a complex, three-year war that's been ongoing along a very long military front with a lot of complexity to it.

So no one's claiming that it's easy, but I want everyone to understand here's the plan. Plan A is get the shooting to stop so that we can move to plan B, phase two, which is have everybody at a table, maybe not – maybe with some shuttle diplomacy, to figure out a way to permanently end this war in a way that's enduring and that respects everybody's needs and so forth. No one is saying that that second part is easy, but we can't get even to that second part until we get past the first part. It's hard to negotiate an enduring end to a war as long as they're shooting at each other, and so the President wants a ceasefire. That's what we're working on. Assuming we can get that done – that won't be easy in and of itself – we move to the second phase, which is negotiating something more enduring and permanent.

That will be hard. It will involve a lot of hard work, concessions from both sides, but it has to happen. This war cannot continue. The President has been clear about that, and he's doing everything he can to bring it to an end.

**QUESTION:** Okay. We'll talk about that later in the program as well with Envoy Witkoff. I want to ask you about a decision you made to revoke a student visa from someone at Columbia University this past week. *TheWall Street Journal* editorial board writes: "The... Administration needs to be careful... [it's] targeting real promoters of terrorism... not breaking the great promise of a green card by deporting anyone with controversial political views." Can you substantiate any form of material support for terrorism, specifically to Hamas –

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**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** – from this Columbia student, or was it simply that he was espousing a controversial political point of view?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, not just the student – we're going to do more. In fact, every day now we're approving visa revocations, and, if that visa led to a green card, the green card process as well. And here's why – it's very simple. When you apply to enter the United States and you get a visa, you are a guest, and you're coming as a student, you're coming as a tourist, or what have you. And in it, you have to make certain assertions. And if you tell us when you apply for a visa, I'm coming to the U.S. to participate in pro-Hamas events, that runs counter to the foreign policy interests of the United States of America. It's that simple. So you lied. You came – if you had told us that you were going to do that, we never would have given you the visa. Now you're here, now you do it, so you lied to us. You're out. It's that simple; it's that straightforward.

**QUESTION:** But is there any – but is there any evidence of a link to terrorism, or is it just his point of view?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Sure – yeah, they take over – I mean, do you not – I mean, you should watch the news. These guys take over entire buildings. They vandalize colleges; they shut down colleges.

**QUESTION:** We covered it intensely.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, then you should know that this is –

**QUESTION:** I'm asking about the specific justification for the revocation of his visa. Was there any evidence of material support for terrorism?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, this specific individual was the spokesperson, was the negotiator – negotiating on behalf of people that took over a campus, that vandalized buildings. Negotiating over what? That's a crime in and of itself that they're involved in being the negotiator or the spokesperson, this, that, the other. We don't want – we don't need these people in our country. We never should have allowed them in in the first place. If he had told us, I'm going over there and I'm going over there to become the spokesperson and one of the leaders of a movement that's going to turn one of your allegedly elite colleges upside down, people can't even go to school, the library – buildings being vandalized, we never would have let him in. We never would

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have let him in to begin with. And now that he's doing it and he's here, he's going to leave and so are others, and we're going to keep doing it.

We are – and by the way, I find it ironic that a lot of these people out there defending the First Amendment speech – alleged free speech rights of these Hamas sympathizers –

**QUESTION:** Yes.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** – they had no problem, okay, pressuring social media to censor American political speech. So I think it's ironic and hypocritical. But the bottom line is this: If you are in this country to promote Hamas, to promote terrorist organizations, to participate in vandalism, to participate –

**QUESTION:** Yeah.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** – in acts of rebellion and riots on campus, we never would have let you in if we had known that, and now that we know it, you're going to leave.

**QUESTION:** Is it only pro-Palestinian people who are going to have their visas revoked, or other points of view as well?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, I think anybody who's here in favor – look, we want to get rid of Tren de Aragua gang members. They're terrorists too. We – the President designated them, asked me to designate, and I did, as a terrorist organization. We want to get rid of them as well. You are – we don't want terrorists in America. I don't know how hard that is to understand. We want people – we don't want people in our country that are going to be committing crimes and undermining our national security or the public safety.

**QUESTION:** Yeah. Okay.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** It's that simple. Especially people that are here as guests – that is what a visa is.

**QUESTION:** Yes.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** I don't know when we've gotten it in our head that a visa is some sort of birthright. It is not. It is a visitor into our country, and if you violate the terms of your visitation, you are going to leave.

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**QUESTION:** Yeah. Okay. Secretary Rubio, we'd like to have you back, talk to you about a lot more on your plate another time, but we have to leave it there.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Thank you.

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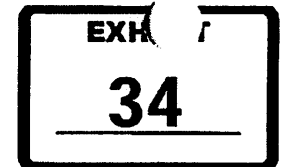
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**Tricia McLaughlin**

@TriciaOhio



Suri was a foreign exchange student at Georgetown University actively spreading Hamas propaganda and promoting antisemitism on social media.

Suri has close connections to a known or suspected terrorist, who is a senior advisor to Hamas. The Secretary of State issued a determination on March 15, 2025 that Suri's activities and presence in the United States rendered him deportable under INA section 237(a)(4)(C)(i).



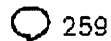
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## Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Guyanese President Irfaan Ali at a Joint Press Availability

REMARKS

MARCO RUBIO, SECRETARY OF STATE

STATE HOUSE

GEORGETOWN GUYANA

MARCH 27, 2025

Secretary Rubio holds a joint press availability with Guyanese President Irfaan Ali



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Secretary of State Marco Rubio and Guyanese President Irfaan Ali at a Joint Press Availability - United States Department of State

**MODERATOR:** Please remain standing. You may be seated. You will be witnessing the signing of the MOU between Guyana and the United States this morning. I now invite the Ministry of Foreign Affairs representative, Mrs. Peggy McLennan, to give an overview.

**MS MCLENNAN:** Thank you, Marcia. Your Excellency Mr. President, members of cabinet, ladies and gentlemen, today, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Hugh Hilton Todd and Secretary of State Marco Rubio are signing a Memorandum of Understanding between our two countries to deepen security cooperation and address regional challenges, including countering narcotics trafficking and transnational organized crime. Under this mechanism, Guyana and the United States will strengthen information sharing, synthetic drug detection, transnational organized crime investigations and prosecutions, and military-to-military cooperation.

**MODERATOR:** Thank you very much. We now have the signing between the two nations.

(The Memorandum of Understanding was signed.)

(Applause.)

**MODERATOR:** Thank you very much, and now I invite his excellency to address us.

**PRESIDENT ALI:** Good afternoon, all. Secretary Rubio, you are no stranger to Guyana. Secretary Rubio has been and continues to be a strong advocate for Guyana's development, democracy, and peace. He has consistently demonstrated his personal commitment to the national rule of law, democracy, and security.

Guyana and the United States share a long bond of friendship and partnership. Indeed, the best of partnerships are those built on shared values, mutual trust, and a commitment to the rule of law and international order. This is what underpins our bilateral relationship and friendship. The United States is our trusted partner as we continue to build a stable, secure, and democratic society here.

This visit has allowed us to consolidate our bilateral agenda – defining policies and outlining clear intentions in areas of security, trade, energy, investments, infrastructure, democracy, regional peace and stability, human capital deployment, and development. I am very pleased at the reassurance of the U.S. in ensuring the safeguard of our territorial integrity and sovereignty. Our

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partnership and joint commitment to the safeguard of this region from every disruptive force is key to the maintenance of democracy and adherence to the rule of law.

The threats from Venezuela were specifically discussed. Their blatant violation of the ICJ order and Argyle Declaration were noted. Our joint commitment in enhanced partnership in combating transnational crime – inclusive of narcotrafficking, human trafficking, money laundering, and all forms of smuggling – is reflected in an enhanced MOU signed today.

We have reassured our partner that we'll continue to ensure all international and local labor laws are adhered to in the hiring of regional and international labor. Further, with our expanding healthcare system and critical shortage of human capital, we'll explore areas of collaboration, filling existing gaps.

We were able to identify key infrastructure that are also critical to regional development as possible areas for investment and development. We have committed to working closely together on the deployment of our energy potential, ensuring greater integration, value creation, and regional energy security, food security, and enhanced trade through joint initiatives to remove hurdles and expand existing areas of interest is key for both countries. I am confident that the outcome of this visit has further aligned our policy agendas, shared commitment, and partnership that will see enormous benefits for our two countries and the region.

Let me once again thank Secretary Rubio for his personal commitment and that of the U.S. government to Guyana and this region in general. I thank you.

(Applause.)

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Thank you. Thank you, Mr. President. And we have been working together and interacting for some time during my time in the Senate, but I told him I wanted to wait until I was Secretary of State to visit, and so here I am. And I didn't know that was going to happen, but I'm grateful for your – for this visit and for the warm welcome we've received, and it's an exciting time to be here.

I think – and to the people of Guyana, thank you for welcoming us. I hope you fully appreciate and understand this is one of the most exciting places in the world to be right now, because you have the opportunity, at this moment, to transform this country for generations, and we want to

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be your partner. We want to be your partner in making that possible. We think it's of mutual benefit to see that happen.

I get to visit in this job – already have – a number of countries in the nine weeks. I've only been on the job for nine weeks, so let the record reflect after nine weeks this was one of my first visits here that I've taken abroad. But we get to visit a lot of countries and when you visit you have some countries, unfortunately, are facing tremendous challenges and they're just looking to stabilize. Other countries are looking to improve and make progress. This country has an opportunity to transform. And that's rare in the history of nations, to have an opportunity for transformative change. And what I mean by transformative change is not simply oil and gas fields. And that's very important – natural resources are critical – but that is just the basic ingredient that allows prosperity to happen.

One of the topics that's talked about all over the world today is data centers and the digitization of the economies, artificial intelligence. Do you know what you need in order to do that? You need to have really good scientists, and engineers, and technicians that know how to run it. But the most important thing you need to be a dominant presence in the world in data centers and artificial intelligence is reliable and affordable energy. That's just one example, among many others.

You have an opportunity to expand, in a responsible way, agriculture production, not just for the needs of your population but for the region, and to do it in a way that safeguards the beauty and the natural environment, that's pristine. You have an opportunity to expand in issues of ecotourism. I'm not a big fan of ecotourism – not – I'm not against ecotourism; I'm not an ecotourist. I like staying at hotels. I'll do it; maybe I'll go somewhere. But there are people that love this stuff. They love it. And you have an opportunity to do that in an incredibly responsible way.

I'm just touching on a few things, but – that are opportunities before you. And that shared prosperity for your country that will come as a result of that is transformative. The lives of your children, the lives of your grandchildren, your lives are going to look very different in five to ten years under this leadership and under this vision as it continues, and we just want to be a partner.

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Why do we want to be a partner? Let's – just to be frank, why does the United States care about it? Number one, we care about it because we think it creates a level of stability in the region which we share – which we share. Not just stability here, stability for your neighbors, because we believe prosperity can become contagious. Just like instability can become contagious, stability and prosperity can become contagious. It won't just help you, it will help all of your neighboring partners in the Caribbean Basin and the region writ large, and we think that ultimately makes life in America safer and more prosperous as well. And so we wanted to look for every opportunity possible to partner with you.

But the basic element of any of this, the basic element of progress and transformation and prosperity, is always security. So number one, we want to make sure that some of the tragic regional problems that exist with crime, transnational crime – we have a huge problem in the world right now with organized gangs and narcotraffickers that destabilize societies – we want to make sure that never reaches here. And that's why today's MOU and the work we'll do together will – is designed not to stop it, but to prevent it from ever taking root, from ever finding its way here. Because unfortunately, sometimes crime is attracted by prosperity and targets prosperity.

And the other are regional threats – the regional threats based on illegitimate territorial claims by a narcotrafficking regime. And I want to be frank, and I've said this during my time as a senator, and I have full confidence in saying now as the Secretary of State: There will be consequences for adventurism. There will be consequences for aggressive actions. And that's why our partnership in that regard will be important. That is not what we want to be a feature of our relationship, but it is a necessity of our relationship, because you have a very difficult challenge on your hands with a dictator that's making illegitimate territorial claims.

And so you have our full commitment and support – today we're demonstrating it – both in tangible ways, and we're going to look for ways to make it long-term and sustainable ways, to make abundantly clear that we are invested both as a nation and from our people in being your partner in transformation and in prosperity. And we will not allow illegitimate territorial claims to be an impediment to your dreams and to your right to develop this country into a symbol that I hope will inspire others to follow the example you set, Mr. President.

So thank you. Thank you for the chance to be with you. (Applause.)

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**MODERATOR:** Thank you very much, Excellency, and Secretary Rubio. Members of the media, in the interests of time, we will accommodate four questions. We will feed two questions from the local media, and two from our visiting media. I recognize Stabroek News from the local media, as well as Mr. Campbell from the local media. From the visiting media – okay, you represent? Good. Great. And – all right, we'll start with Marcelle from Stabroek News.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Hi.

**QUESTION:** Good afternoon, sir.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Good afternoon.

**QUESTION:** Marcelle Thomas from the Stabroek News. You just spoke of consequences for aggressive actions, and that the U.S. is Guyana's partner. Given Venezuela's unprovoked aggression towards Guyana, I want to know if your country would stand by Guyana militarily if Venezuela were to attack this country. And what would be the U.S.'s response should Venezuela attack U.S. oil major ExxonMobil, which is operating in Guyana's waters?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** It will be a very bad day for the Venezuelan regime if they were to attack Guyana or attack ExxonMobil or anything like – it would be a very bad day, a very bad week for them. And it would not end well for them. (Applause.) I'm not going to get into details of what we'll do; we're not big on those kinds of threats. I think everybody understands, and I want it to be clear – we've made this clear repeatedly – I think the U.S. Navy today is making it clear and demonstrating our ability to – we have a big navy and it can get almost anywhere in the – it can get anywhere in the world. And we have commitments that exist today with Guyana. We want to build on those and expand on those. And we'll leave it for the appropriate time, but suffice it to say that if that regime were to do something such as that, it would be a very bad move. It would be a big mistake for them.

**MODERATOR:** We now invite from our visiting media. Please remember to identify yourself and the media house you represent.

**QUESTION:** Hi, thank you. Hello, Mr. Secretary.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Hi.

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**QUESTION:** Hello, Mr. President. Thank you for taking questions from us. We appreciate it.

Humeyra Pamuk from Reuters. Mr. Secretary, a Turkish student in Boston was detained and handcuffed on the street by plainclothes agents. A year ago she wrote an opinion piece about the Gaza war. Could you help us understand what the specific action she took led to her visa being revoked? And what was your State Department's role in that process?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** We revoked her visa. It's an F1 visa, I believe. We revoked it, and here's why – and I'll say it again; I've said it everywhere. Let me be abundantly clear, okay. If you go apply for a visa right now anywhere in the world – let me just send this message out – if you apply for a visa to enter the United States and be a student and you tell us that the reason why you're coming to the United States is not just because you want to write op-eds, but because you want to participate in movements that are involved in doing things like vandalizing universities, harassing students, taking over buildings, creating a ruckus, we're not going to give you a visa. If you lie to us and get a visa and then enter the United States and with that visa participate in that sort of activity, we're going to take away your visa.

Now, once you've lost your visa, you're no longer legally in the United States, and we have a right, like every country in the world has a right, to remove you from our country. So it's just that simple.

I think it's crazy – I think it's stupid for any country in the world to welcome people into their country that are going to go to their universities as visitors – they're visitors – and say I'm going to your universities to start a riot, I'm going to your universities to take over a library and harass people. I don't care what movement you're involved in. Why would any country in the world allow people to come and disrupt? We gave you a visa to come and study and get a degree, not to become a social activist that tears up our university campuses. And if we've given you a visa and then you decide to do that, we're going to take it away.

I encourage every country to do that, by the way, because I think it's crazy to invite students into your country that are coming onto your campus and destabilizing it. We're just not going to have it. So we'll revoke your visa; and once your visa is revoked, you're illegally in the country and you have to leave. Every country in the world has a right to decide who comes in as a visitor and who doesn't.

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If you invite me into your home because you say, "I want to come to your house for dinner," and I go to your house and I start putting mud on your couch and spray-painting your kitchen, I bet you you're going to kick me out. Well, we're going to do the same thing if you come into the United States as a visitor and create a ruckus for us. We don't want it. We don't want it in our country. Go back and do it in your country, but you're not going to do it in our country.

**QUESTION:** A follow-up?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Sure. Just tell me your follow-up and I'll tell every – and depending on your question, I'll answer it or not.

**MODERATOR:** No follow-up questions. All right. I now invite our Guyanese –

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, no. She had – can I get her follow-up real quick? Go ahead.

**QUESTION:** Could you confirm – there's new reporting that 300 visas – State Department has revoked 300 (inaudible).

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Maybe more. It might be more than 300 at this point. We do it every day. Every time I find one of these lunatics, I take away their visa.

**QUESTION:** It could – you're saying it could be more than 300 visas?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Sure. I hope – I mean, at some point I hope we run out because we've gotten rid of all of them. But we're looking every day for these lunatics that are tearing things up. And by the way, we want to get rid of gang members, too.

So Venezuela sent us a bunch of gang members. I'm sure you've heard of Tren de Aragua, Mr. President – a terrible gang, vicious gang. They flooded in our – yesterday – just so everybody knows, yesterday one of these gang members who was involved in New York City in attacking a police officer was deported back to Venezuela, because they're now taking flights again because of some strong measures we've taken. And this guy lands – this guy's a guy that attacked a police officer in New York City and laughed about it in court with a smirk on his face. When he gets off the plane in Venezuela, he's welcomed by this character named Diosdado Cabello. I don't know if you've heard of this guy. And he welcomes him, hugging the guy. So does anybody have any

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doubt that these people are pushing these people into the United States to destabilize us and the region?

So yeah, we're looking for people like this, and we want to get them out of the United States, absolutely.

**MODERATOR:** Thank you. We'll now field a question from Guyana.

**QUESTION:** Thank you. Kurt Campbell, Newsroom. President Ali, you've already spoken about how President Trump's plans – tariff plans for China's ships could affect regional trade. I just wanted to know if in your trade talks today if that issue was specifically discussed –

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** – by Secretary of State Rubio.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** And I can tell you – oh, you're asking him. I'm sorry. (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** It's for both of you. What assurances can you give Guyana and this hemisphere in terms of stemming indirect consequences?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yes. Well, that's – look, the goal the President has in doing so is we need to have an ability to build ships in this world that don't just come from China, okay. I think it's just dangerous to have one country in the world building all the ships. I assure you that – and we don't want a war, but I mean, they're not going to build ships for us if we get in trouble, right? So we need to have alternatives to Chinese ships, and we're trying to create a market and a demand for alternatives to Chinese shipping construction. And I'm the first one to admit that the United States made a terrible mistake when we deindustrialized and we allowed all these industries to leave our country and go to other places. Now we're paying the consequences, but we have to fix it.

So I do believe – I can't speak – I don't – the trade portfolio does not belong to the Department of State, but I do believe that we will take this back because we've heard this not just here, Mr. President. We've heard it throughout our visits here in the Caribbean. And we're going to take it back and explain to those who are in charge of trade policy that there are some implications to applying it to certain nations who are partners and who are seeking to develop their economies

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in ways that I think serve the national interest of the United States, not to mention the national interest of our partners nations, and seeing what can happen.

So I can't make a commitment to those exempt, because that's not something we handle in the Department of State. What I can commit to is that I will most certainly raise this issue as a recurring issue, in multiple places, that it would have a real detrimental effect on economic development. Maybe in 10 years it won't be an issue because there's been some diversification, maybe in five, but right now it would be problematic. That message I'll take back to Washington and to my colleagues that are handling the trade portfolio, and we'll see how the President decides to proceed. But rest assured we will take that message back.

**PRESIDENT ALI:** And just to echo the sentiments that, yes, we did discuss it and the region would have raised it also. But there Secretary Rubio is – as he said, will take this back and to see whether there can be any special initiative for the region, given our specific circumstances.

But let me say also that we have a responsibility to our friends. The U.S. is a great friend of ours. The U.S. would have made it very clear that they are ready to stand by us in our development, in our economic expansion, in our security, and in our defense. And I will say very boldly that such friends must have some different and preferential treatment, because a friend who will defend me when I need a friend to defend me, must be a friend that enjoys some special place in our hearts and in our country, and that will be the case. Thank you.

**QUESTION:** And just quickly, illegal migration was also listed as a topic of discussion. Could you say what are the expectations from Guyana in this regard and any discussions on third-country deportations?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, we want to work with you on that. I think that's a problem for you as well. I mean, obviously, because of the combination of your growing economy, labor needs, and your geography, you have been a place where a lot of people have come in, and I think you want it to be the right people, right? So I think if we have information that someone has entered your country who has bad intentions, we want to be able to share that with your government because you don't want that.

You don't want those – if we have information on a Tren de Aragua gang member from Venezuela, we want to make sure that we're – we have collaboration and we're sharing that

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information. If we have information that some narcotrafficker is taking up shop here and has decided to try to turn this into a base of operation, which could become – could lead to violence and warfare here, gang warfare, we want to be able to share that with you. We want to prevent these problems from happening.

So from the perspective of Guyana, which is not a source country of migration to the United States per se – illegal migration – but it is a country that receives, unfortunately, you're getting a lot of people. And not everybody that comes here – I mean, most people are probably here to work hard and so forth, but not everyone. So if we have information that someone is in your country that we know is a bad person, we want to be able to share it with you. We want to be able to share it with you very quickly. So that sort of information sharing has to be a cornerstone of this security agreement that we've signed today and want to continue to expand upon.

**MODERATOR:** We will now field our final question from our visiting media.

**QUESTION:** Thank you so much. Vera with the – Vera Bergengruen with Wall Street Journal.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** They're very tough, this Wall Street – be careful. All right. (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** Secretary Rubio, when you and President Bukele – you mentioned Tren de Aragua several times. When you and President Bukele negotiated the deal to transfer the U.S. deportees to his prison in CECOT, did you discuss any provisions to ensure that individuals mistakenly identified as gang members would have access to legal recourse and that they can secure their release if they are wrongly brought – wrongfully detained?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, we have – that list was carefully vetted, provided to us by Homeland Security. We have confidence in it. What we negotiated is the reality that they, in El Salvador, comply with all the international requirements for imprisonment. So we sent them people. It was a combination of people – gang members, people we knew were involved in activities that were not productive to the United States, all of them removable in terms of our laws, all of them; every single one of them was someone who was removable from the United States irrespective – and MS-13 members, some of – many of whom are Salvadoran that we had identified as MS-13 members, that they had helped us identify as well. And that – so it was a combination of people that we sent. And we may send more. We'll see. I mean, it's up to their willingness to accept, but we are grateful to them for the opportunity to do that.

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And remember, one of the reasons why we had to send some of those people there was because at the time Venezuela wasn't taking their people back. The Maduro regime – I say Venezuela, but it's not – it's the Maduro regime – was not taking their people back. They refused to take people back, their own people. They have an obligation. If you are a country and someone is illegally in another country, you have an obligation to take those people back, whether they're criminals or not. Venezuela said they wouldn't take them back, so we had to find a place to send them, especially the ones that had records and – or ones that we had strong suspicions and evidence that were involved in illicit activity.

And so we had to send some to El Salvador because of that. Now they've taken them back. And one of them yesterday gets off an airplane, and this narcotrafficker Cabello greets him and hugs him on the tarmac. Now, what I heard ultimately, by the way, is that some of these gang members we sent back were so bad to Venezuela – they were so bad that after hugging them, maybe not this guy but I don't know, they had to put four or five of them back in jail. Because that's how dangerous these people are, even though they hugged them on the tarmac and put on this show.

These are some really bad people. Tren de Aragua is one of the most dangerous gangs the world has ever seen, okay? When they were held temporarily in Guantanamo while being transferred to Honduras because that's when the Venezuelans picked some of them up, the Marines at Guantanamo said these are some of the roughest people we've ever interacted with. They were worse than the al-Qaida guys that were in their jails. Think about that. So that's who we're getting rid of, and we want to get rid of more of them.

**MODERATOR:** Ladies and gentlemen, members of the media, this brings the end to our media conference. And I would like to invite his excellency and Secretary Rubio for a photo op right on the stage. (Applause.)

## TAGS

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# Secretary of State Marco Rubio Remarks to the Press

REMARKS

MARCO RUBIO, SECRETARY OF STATE

EN ROUTE MIAMI, FLORIDA

MARCH 28, 2025

**QUESTION:** Can I ask a non-trip question, because I want to know what's happening with this Ukrainian children grant.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Grant?

**QUESTION:** The Ukrainian children who —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Oh, the data. The data is secured. We secured the data. We'll transfer it to the appropriate party. We've ensured that. And we'll be able to say that next week. We already notified that. If we haven't, we're about to notify Congress. I think we've gotten some letters.

**QUESTION:** Yeah.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** So there's no danger to the data that's been collected on that.

**QUESTION:** But is the program back on?

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**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, no, the program we're not – the program is not funded. It was part of the reductions that were made, but we secured the data and we've ensured that we have it and it can be transferred to any appropriate authorities, and we'll issue a congressional – I don't know if it's a notification or just responses to the letters they've written us.

**QUESTION:** This is the Conflict Observatory?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** How is the —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** You're not going to hit me with that mike like the President got hit? (Laughter.) Okay.

**QUESTION:** And when you were answering the – Mr. Secretary, earlier, you said 300 visas? It's actually —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, the —

**QUESTION:** Are they all student visas or —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, no, no, you guys – you asked – the question was, was there 300? I know that number's been cited. I said it might be more because we're doing them every day, primarily student visas, some visitors visas.

**QUESTION:** Okay, so just making sure. Just making sure.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** I don't know actually if it's primarily student visas. It's a combination of visas. They're visitors to the country. If they're taking activities that are counter to our foreign – to our national interest, to our foreign policy, we'll revoke the visa.

**QUESTION:** Are all of those related to pro-Palestinian protests or (inaudible)?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** I'm trying to remember – there's a lot of them now, because I've gone through every one of them. I think there might be a few that are not, that are related to other groups that are – of people – we've also identified – but this actually is – it should be automatically

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revoked. We've also identified people that have criminal charges and even while in the country, and still have active visas. Some are unrelated to any protests and are just having to do with potential criminal activity.

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible.)

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Huh?

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible.)

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, I have to sign every single one.

**QUESTION:** And what is the —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Or the autopen. I'm kidding. No autopen. I'm just joking.

**QUESTION:** And what does it mean when you say against the foreign policy of the United States?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** It runs counter to our foreign — that's how we issue visas coming in. I think about it this way. If we knew this information — my standard: If we knew this information about them before we gave them a visa, would we have allowed them in? And if the answer is no, then we revoke the visa.

**QUESTION:** Can I ask you on a different topic, Türkiye? You had the meeting with the foreign minister a few days ago. I think yesterday they — yesterday or today they expelled the BBC correspondent. They arrested an AP photographer. How concerned are you with how things are going there?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, ultimately — and look, we've expressed that we're concerned. We don't like to see the direction that's going. It's an ally. It's a partner in NATO. Anytime you have instability on the ground, you don't like to see it. Obviously, they have internal domestic political considerations. We're not necessarily going to always opine on every single one of them. To the extent we have deeper concerns, we expect to express them at least privately at the outset, certainly in a new administration when we're trying to establish relations. But we watch the same news reports everybody else sees about what's going on. We're certainly concerned about these

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protests and some of the reports. But we raised that and – but I haven't seen what – what you referenced in the last day, yeah.

**QUESTION:** Just on Turkey, in your tweet —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Türkiye.

**QUESTION:** Yes, Türkiye. In your tweet —

**QUESTION:** Are you guys going to change that? Are you going to back to Turkey?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** When we're in Türkiye we're going to say Türkiye.

**QUESTION:** In your tweet, the final sentence is basically about the arrest of Istanbul mayor. You're not saying that explicitly, but those are their (inaudible).

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, I mean, and we talked about that. I mean, their argument is that the mayor is involved in corruption, that this has been a longstanding issue that it's finally got acted upon, and that he is seeking refuge behind his politics. I don't know all the facts about it. Obviously, that's not what the mayor is saying or what the political opposition is saying is that this is a leader that might have won the election had he been allowed to run.

So we're watching it. We've expressed concern. We don't like to see instability like that in the governance of any country that's such a close ally, especially, and it —

**QUESTION:** After your post, Turkish diplomatic sources actually denied that this had come up and you had expressed your concern. I just wanted to ask you about that.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, I did raise it with the foreign minister, and probably exactly in the words that I'm using now, and that is we're watching these reports and obviously it's disturbing to see, and we talked about it in those terms. But as I said, we don't like to see that kind of instability or these things happening inside countries that we hope to partner with on a bunch of things. And President Trump had a very good working relationship with President Erdogan in the first administration. I think they would like to restart that. But they're a NATO ally, and we would like to cooperate with them in Syria and in other places. So I think it's possible to raise concerns

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and at the same time understand we have a lot of other things to partner on as well. We have – that's the balance of conducting a mature foreign policy.

**QUESTION:** Can you speak about the European leaders who said today that they – they oppose lifting sanctions on Russia, they don't think it's time to do that? Are you all considering that? Can you talk about deliberations?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, no, so we met with the Russians. Our team was over there this week. They came back and they arrived last night, I think, or early some point yesterday. So we're going to reconvene. I had some calls about it today. We're sort of going to analyze what they're – what they're raising and sort of study what exactly it is. It's a host of sanctions, including sanctions that are not American. They've raised potentially a couple – my readout of it – they're not even American sanctions, so we couldn't lift them if we wanted to. We're going to sort of analyze what our team came back with. We'll present those options to the President. The President will make those decisions. We're not there yet.

**QUESTION:** Have you received Iran's response to the President's letter?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Have I what? I'm sorry.

**QUESTION:** Received it, Iran's response.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, I'm not going to comment on that yet other than to say the President's letter has been publicly reported. I expect there will be a response, and obviously, at that point, the President will decide what steps, if any, he wants to take next.

**QUESTION:** Can we go back to visa issue just for a second? I mean, a lot of people feel freedom of speech concerns about it. Are you saying that if you come and if you apply for a visa and get a student visa and you don't lie, and you tell the truth and you're not coming to protest or anything, but during the course of your studies, wherever it is in the U.S., you develop views or opinions that are at odds with the administration's foreign policy – say you learn something in your course of study that makes you think that what the policy is wrong – and then you protest it or write something about it, don't do anything violent, is that grounds enough to revoke a visa?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, I think there's a little bit of common sense here. You come to the States and then you decide you don't like those paper straws that some of the stores are selling



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and you start protesting or complaining about paper straws – I mean, we’re obviously not going to yank a visa over that. I think it crosses a line – think about it this way. No one has a right to a visa. These are things that we decide. We deny visas every day for all kinds of reasons all over the world. We deny visas because we think people might overstay. We deny visas because the country they come from are people that historically overstay. We deny visas every day, and we can revoke visas. If you have the power to deny, you have the power to revoke.

I would argue that the – what I would add to it is what we have seen on campuses across the country where students literally cannot go to school, you cannot – buildings are being taken over, activities going on – this is clearly an organized movement. And if you are in this country on a student visa and are a participant in those movements, we have a right to deny your visa. I think it would make sense to deny your visa. We’re going to err on the side of caution. We are not going to be importing activists into the United States. They’re here to study. They’re here to go to class. They’re not here to lead activist movements that are disruptive and undermine the – our universities. I think it’s lunacy to continue to allow that.

**QUESTION:** So expressing any kind of view —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** And by the way, I’ve been saying that since I was in the Senate. Now I’m just in a position to do something about it.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Now that’s a broad thing to say – any kind of views. But when you’re aligning yourself with groups that are behind these activities, openly aligning yourself with these groups that are behind these disruptive criminal activities in the United States, your visa is going to get yanked.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary, I don’t —

**QUESTION:** Hamas?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, there may be others. I mean, if you come here and join Tren de Aragua, we’re going to yank your visa too. If —

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary?

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**SECRETARY RUBIO:** And so there may be other movements, but that's partly the movement we've seen on college campuses. Let's be clear: It is a movement that is supportive of the group that just slaughtered babies, like deliberately targeted and slaughtered babies and civilians and took hostages and killed hostages. That's the group they're aligning with.

But beyond that, they are spray-painting buildings. They are taking over buildings. You must have seen these reports in campus after campus where students can't go to class and can't function and the universities don't know what to do about it. When you look at it and you realize that some of the people involved in this are here on student visas, it's crazy. We're not going to keep doing that. We're not. Don't come here. If you're going to do that, go somewhere else. Don't come here.

**QUESTION:** And I brought up the protests in Hong Kong in 2019, which I covered, because there were also shutdowns of college campuses back then. There were foreign students that were involved. There was graffiti. They stopped traffic at intersections. They shut down subway stations. They were largely peaceful, but there were also these instances that disrupted public life and there were foreign students that were involved there. And so, like, under your rationale, the Hong Kong authorities or the —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, every country in the world can deny visas to whoever they want. It's that simple. That's a fact. Whether we like it or not, they can deny visas.

Number two, that movement was not a movement in favor of a group that slaughtered babies and innocents. That's not what that – that movement, they were people who were complaining because there was no democracy, but I mean and they were upset about the direction Hong Kong was headed and the Chinese law that was being imposed. But they have – every country in the world has a right to deny you a visa. I'm not entitled to a visa. You're not entitled to a visa. Nobody is entitled to a visa in any other country. They can determine it and they can revoke it at any time they want.

Now, let's – I think it's important is that there's a clear distinction between protesting against the democratic order and protesting in favor of groups that advocate the slaughter and murder of innocent people, which is what many of these groups are supportive of. Beyond that, these groups are not just taking over – these are not sit-ins we're talking about. We are talking about buildings that have been vandalized, defaced, that where they – for months on end in some

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cases. We're just not going to continue to allow it. I don't understand what people don't get. A visa is a gift. It's a voluntary thing. We decide to give you a visa. We deny visas all over the world every day for a variety of reasons, and that means we can also revoke those visas. No one is entitled to a visa.

**QUESTION:** I guess some of the examples have come up like a student at Tufts University, like all they did was write an op-ed for the student newspaper advocating for a certain point of view. They're not – as far as we can tell, they haven't openly advocated for Hamas.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, we will – those – as they go, or if they seek to self-deport they can do that, because that's what we've done. We're basically asking them to leave the country. That's why they've been detained. They can do so tomorrow. Buy an airplane ticket and leave. No problem.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** But I would add to this that I would caution you against solely going off of what the media has been able to identify, and those presentations, if necessary, will be made in court.

**QUESTION:** But for example, in that – the Turkish students, the Tufts student's case, I asked you today did she have – has she committed, like, or has she carried out any of those things that you just listed?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** The activities presented to me meet the standard of what I've just described to you: people that are supportive of movements that run counter to the foreign policy of the United States. If necessary and a court compels us, we'll provide that information. But ultimately it's a visa. Judges don't issue student visas. There is no right to a student visa. We can cancel a student visa under the law just the same way that we can deny a student visa under the law. And we will do so in cases we find appropriate.

The overwhelming majority of student visas in this country will not be revoked, because the overwhelming majority of people that are coming to this country to study are not involved and associated or aligned with organizations that seek to do damage in this country, and that, frankly, organizations that hate the United States Government and hate our way of life. So I just think it's

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crazy to continue to provide visas so people can come here and advocate for policies that are in direct contradiction of our national interest.

**QUESTION:** Right, but are the schools raising these issues with you? Are these – are there out —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Oh, I'm sure they're —

**QUESTION:** Are these outside groups that they're raising —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Oh, I don't know. I mean, I'm sure they are. I mean —

**QUESTION:** Like, how does it come to – come to your desk? Yeah.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Oh, bringing it to us? Well, we're not – we're not going to talk about the process by which we're identifying it because obviously we're looking for more people.

**QUESTION:** Have you seen the video of her being detained?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** I haven't. But look, detention is simple. Your visa is expired, your visa is revoked, you have to leave.

**QUESTION:** But it's six hooded figures with masks on their face who don't identify themselves until they already grabbed her wrist. It's quite horrifying.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, I mean, unfortunately our agents – I mean, I'm not – that's a DHS or ICE, so I don't know what their practices are. But our agents have had to protect their identity because they've found themselves targeted – targeted for violence, targeted for operations against them. I would say most of these protesters are wearing masks too, and they're not in law enforcement.

**QUESTION:** Can I ask you a different topic? U.S.-funded media. Radio Martí is something that I believe you've supported in the past. What do you think of the cut in funding for that entity?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, first of all, they're not part of the – they're not – we don't control that. That's a separate entity that does it. My understanding is that Martí has actually started rebroadcasting today, and a few others. I think the executive order called for them to be – all

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these agencies to be reduced to the statutory minimum. And I think the goal ultimately over time, as I understand it, is to reform these entities so that they provide news that, frankly, favors and advances the national interest of the United States. We have plenty of independent media outlets, including all of you, and then we are interested in media outlets that present America's point of view from our foreign policy standpoint. And so that review will be ongoing, but obviously that's outside the State Department. I don't control those.

**QUESTION:** What about the cuts (inaudible) —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** I wish I did, though, but I don't. Not yet, anyway. Maybe we'll see, but I don't know.

**QUESTION:** What about cuts to some of the other programs in Cuba that were supporting dissidents, that were supporting political prisoners?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, well, some of them were not. Some of them will be restudied over time. I think ultimately we're trying to find programs that are effective. No one's been —

**QUESTION:** But no, it – as you know, there's (inaudible) in general always in Cuba right now.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, but there's – I – there's a bunch that were – that we approved that are on the – not even got waived, just got restarted and we're doing them. There's others that we have suspended because we didn't think we were getting the return on the investment. That money may be repurposed to a program that works better for the same cost.

**QUESTION:** You mentioned that Marines have said – Marines at Guantanamo Bay have said that the Tren de Aragua members there —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Oh, yeah.

**QUESTION:** — were more violent than al-Qaida members.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Not just more violent, very well organized. They were able to communicate with each other, the hand signals, all kinds of – I mean, this is a prison gang, so it doesn't surprise me. That's how the Tren de Aragua originates from, so it doesn't surprise me that they're very effective in that setting.

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They're also very dangerous to keep in our country. When you keep prison gangs in your country, they grow, they metastasize. MS-13 was actually a group that was started by Salvadoran – either Salvadoran refugees and/or actually people born in the U.S. of Salvadoran descent in prisons. MS-13 did not originate in El Salvador; they originated in U.S. prisons and spread down and back to El Salvador. Prison gangs are very dangerous because they recruit and then they – they almost create academies within the prisons that then metastasize and spill out to the general population.

**QUESTION:** Have you spoken to the Marines down in Guantanamo, or did they (inaudible)?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** I spoke to one that was in Guantanamo because I know them through a family friend, but I've also spoken to both Pete Hegseth about this and, if I'm not mistaken, Secretary Noem as well. And they both – when I asked them, "Is this true?" they both confirmed that's what their officers and people on the ground were telling them. So actually I heard this from a personal acquaintance, and then I actually had it affirmed to me by two members of the cabinet.

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible.)

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible) some of the people sent down to El Salvador to the prison weren't actually gang members, but that, for example, there was a (inaudible) with a tattoo (inaudible) supporting autism, people with autism, but it looked like a gang tattoo to the immigration agent and then (inaudible) mistakes made. How do you address that?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, ultimately that – all of that was the work of the Department of Homeland Security. They've identified them. I have confidence in the assessments that they've made. They're – but I can't speak to any one of the individual cases because we're not involved in compiling them. But I have no reason – in fact, I have confidence that they compiled a good list. And if we have an opportunity to send more, we will – gang members, MS-13, whatever we can send.

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible) isn't it an issue of due process? I mean, was that raised with President Bukele? Do these people have a right to appeal in some way?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Every single one of them was deportable for reasons even beyond the Alien Enemies Act. The MS-13 as well. They were all deportable. Many of these people had orders of

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deportation already and were either in custody or had been recently apprehended. So every single person that was sent there was deportable.

Unfortunately, if they're of Venezuelan descent, up until this week the Venezuelans were not picking anybody up. They were not allowing anybody to go back. They're the only country in the hemisphere that was refusing to accept anyone. They have restarted those suddenly, and hopefully they'll continue and then we won't have to use El Salvador.

**QUESTION:** So why use the Alien Enemies Act if they were deportable anyway? Because that just seems to be (inaudible) inviting a challenge to it.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, I think the expedited nature of it. These gangs were organized. They were – they were presenting very real and immediate risks in a number of communities in our country in an organized fashion. We have reason to believe that they were actually being pushed towards the United States in large numbers by the regime in Venezuela. You saw just yesterday one of them arrived in Venezuela and was greeted on the tarmac as a hero. This is an individual that was arrested for – caught on video – attacking police officers in Times Square, (inaudible) to law enforcement after doing so. So we believe that in many ways the Venezuelan regime has encouraged that flow of these groups towards the United States to create harm in our country.

**QUESTION:** The reason I ask is that we know (inaudible) Thursday before we left on Friday (inaudible) spoken to President Bukele twice, and this was all arranged, and —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** I've spoken to him a number of times.

**QUESTION:** I know, but this —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Not just the only time you were around.

**QUESTION:** Well, no, no, no, this was the (inaudible).

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yes.

**QUESTION:** This was the Thursday – Thursday night.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yes.

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**QUESTION:** So now we're into Friday, and it became clear with this transfer of diplomatic notes from El Salvador and the stuff that the State Department was doing to get the money ready – 20 grand per person per year for this initial tranche of (inaudible). And it made clear that the President was going to go in and sign the AEA declaration, and yet it didn't come out until after, so Saturday. Why? Was that —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, about the AEA declaration, that came from the White House. My conversations with President Bukele were as a follow-up and to finalize in a verbal agreement we had reached in my visit to El Salvador on my first trip as the Secretary, so it was just sort of following up on that and how we were going to proceed with it. We were ready now to execute at some point, and we were working through those arrangements with them. And that's what those calls were about. It was just sort of to finalize what we had agreed on.

**QUESTION:** So you don't think that the White House delayed (inaudible)? Because the President did sign the AEA declaration on Friday.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah.

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible) it wasn't (inaudible)?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** I can't speak to the timing of why they released the one they did. I can tell you – and I think you were on that trip – that the agreement to house criminal aliens was reached with President Bukele back in February.

**QUESTION:** Yes.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** And so we spoke – I've spoken to him since then, but obviously this – those days that I was there we did because we had a couple of open questions that we wanted answers to and that he wanted answers to, and we were finalizing that.

**QUESTION:** Mr. Secretary, on Russia, about a month ago when we were in Riyadh, you were first starting on speaking with them, and you said something. You said soon enough we're going to find out whether they're acting in good faith or not, we just need to test it out. So a month later where do you stand? Are they (inaudible) —

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**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, I'm not prepared to pass judgment on it. They're meeting with us. They're talking to us. They're making proposals. They're agreeing to ceasefires but with conditions that we need to analyze.

**QUESTION:** So is that dragging their feet, actually?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** I wouldn't – I'm not prepared to characterize it as one or the other. What I've said almost from the very beginning is, I mean, this war is complex. As you can see, it's now going on three years. And I never said it was going to be simple. There's a lot of work to be done with both sides, in particular the Russian side, which we haven't talked to in years. So —

**QUESTION:** How long do you anticipate these negotiations to continue?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** We're going to – we're trying to achieve peace. We're committed to trying to achieve peace as long as it takes. That doesn't mean that I can guarantee you that there's going to be an agreement in a week or a month. I just can't put a timeframe on it because it doesn't depend on us. It depends on the Russians and it depends on the Ukrainians. It also depends on our partners in Europe who have sanctions that will have to be taken into account, I believe, as part of any final deal.

But I always think it's progress when at least specifics are being agreed to even though they may not be agreeable to both sides, because we get to determine sort of the negotiating posture and what the impediments are to peace. So I think when you negotiate, when you sit down with people and they – and you talk about these things, they have to memorialize these things in documents, at least it begins to give definition to what the impediments to peace are.

As far as willingness, that'll be tested when the time comes to sign or if – if we've dealt with impediments and there's still resistance from one side or the other, then we'll know. But we're not at that stage yet.

**QUESTION:** Do you anticipate this moving soon beyond the technical level and back to higher-level talks?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, I think you have to make more progress on a technical level at this point, but we'll see. We're going to analyze it. As I said, when they arrive back from Saudi Arabia I want to sit and talk to our team that was on the ground and get a better sense how those

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negotiations went, because a lot of it isn't just what was written and what was said over 12 hours. And by the way, we met with the Ukrainians twice as well, so we want to get that perspective, which we met with them on Sunday and again on Tuesday, and the Russians on Monday. So I need to hear from them directly a little bit more about how it went, and then we'll present that. We'll meet with the team and we'll present that to the President, and then decide on a path of what the next steps are.

**QUESTION:** Can I ask you a different topic? Sudan. We've seen certainly an upsurge in violence. The army says they have kicked out from the presidential palace. You've seen the strike on the market. Is there anything diplomatically that the U.S. can (inaudible)?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** We're engaged in conversations with a number of countries, with Ethiopia, with Kenya, in just over the last 72 hours where we've been raising that. And we're very concerned that we're going to backslide to where we were a decade or less ago, and so we don't want to see that. And so we're trying to figure out and we've been engaging with our partners about soliciting their ideas about what can we do on this matter to – what contributions can the United States make to stabilize it now. There are a number of places we're doing that. We're doing that with DRC-Rwanda as well. So there are a couple of places like that that we find ourselves sort of asking our regional partners how do they believe we can be most helpful and engaging, and with our partners outside the region as well. We've spoken – I spoke to the foreign minister of the UK yesterday about this topic.

**QUESTION:** (Inaudible) Iran and the (inaudible) letter (inaudible)?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Oh, he just asked me that, but you couldn't hear.

**QUESTION:** Oh, sorry.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, that's okay. I just have to – now I have to remember the answer, because it has to be identical. (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** You have to (inaudible).

**QUESTION:** Give us the details.

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**SECRETARY RUBIO:** It's been publicly reported that the – that the President sent a message. I anticipate a response on that, and – but we have nothing else to announce on that. Is that pretty much what I told you? All right.

**QUESTION:** Can I ask —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** All right. Well, the game is going to start. That's why. (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** What brought about your hatred for ecotourism?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** I don't hate ecotourism. It's just —

**QUESTION:** You said —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, no, no, no. I said I'm not a fan of ecotourism, but I'm not against it. People like to do that stuff. But like, to me, a vacation does not involve snakes and spiders. So that's my view. Maybe that'll change. I don't know.

**MS BRUCE:** All right.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** All right. Thanks, guys.

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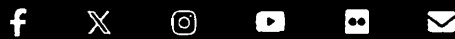
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**QUESTION:** Well, guys, joining me now, Secretary of State Marco Rubio. Good to have you, Marco. How's everything?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Thanks for having me. Thank you. Thanks for having me on here.

**QUESTION:** Well, I imagine this is a good day given the outcome of the basketball game last night.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, yeah, yeah. It was good to – by the way, that young guy, he's – I think he's the youngest coach maybe since – they were saying last night on TV since Valvano to win a national title. He's only been there three years. They hired him from the University of San Francisco. He played, I think, six or seven years in Israel in basketball and then he came over, and he's done a great job. And that's a team that's not built with a bunch of like high-number recruits, like five-star famous guys. He's kind of pieced it together. So it's great. It's great for the school.

The only thing that's crazy is you watch the videos of these kids – my son's at the University of Florida – and these kids climbing up on the light poles and stuff like that, [Cookie Settings](#)

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I don't know. I don't remember that back in the day. People just won, they had a parade. Now they want to tear up the town even the night before. So that was the only downside of winning, is seeing these people risking their lives over in Gainesville.

**QUESTION:** Yeah, listen, kids are going to be kids. I think I'm okay with kids being kids. I think we need a little bit more of that as well. But yeah, we've got to be a little careful.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, I draw the line at life-threatening shows of enthusiasm. Those are the things that – luckily, my son wasn't the guy on the lightpost. But I saw that last night, I was like, somewhere there's a nervous mom.

**QUESTION:** Well, thank you again, Mr. Secretary, for taking the time. I guess to start off, it was interesting to see the Supreme Court yesterday, in my opinion, smartly lifted the restraining order against the Trump Administration as it relates to the ability to deport Tren del Aragua murderous, drug-dealing gang members to El Salvador. Can you talk about the significance of this? I know you've been dealing with this a lot on a daily basis. I know you were intimately involved, obviously, when they were trying to recall to make sure we couldn't deport murderous thugs. But can you talk about that historic work coordinating with President Bukele of El Salvador to get these criminals actually off of our streets?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, a couple things. The most important thing about that court ruling is it said you have to file it, you have to go before the judge wherever those people are being held before they're sent abroad. Because right now, what was happening is these activists were basically just finding a court – they would find – they'd forum shop. They'd find, "Where can I find a friendly federal judge that gives me the highest probability of victory in court?" So you have over 600-something District Court judges, and so you have a guy in New Jersey or a guy in New York or a guy in D.C. basically enjoining the entire country. I mean, one of these federal judges has the power to stop the entire federal government in all 50 states and every one of our territories.

And so I think the most important thing the court said is, number one, if you want to fight these things, you have to fight it in the jurisdiction where they're being sent from or being held – in this case, Texas – which clearly, for whatever reason, these lawyers, they don't want to go to Texas to file it, right?

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And then the other is just the power of the federal government to conduct foreign policy. We have a judge right now that is basically trying to order the federal government, the Executive Branch, to bring people back. In essence, they are trying to order us to go to the president of El Salvador and tell him you must now send people back to us. So we can't live in a country – it's just not constitutional – where judges are now conducting the foreign policy of the United States.

The trip to El Salvador was one of the first trips I did. I think it was two weeks in, maybe three weeks in, as Secretary of State. I met with Bukele. I've known him for a long time. He's very pro-American, very – likes the President a lot. He's going to be visiting here pretty soon – I think maybe next week it is when he's going to be coming to the Oval Office. And he agreed; he said, look, I've built these prisons and I will house people here. First of all, he wants his MS-13 killers that are in the United States, because they're wanted for crimes in El Salvador too.

And then he's also willing to hold members of this dangerous Venezuelan gang, and he's doing it at a fraction of the cost of what it would cost us here in the United States to hold them. These – this is one of the most dangerous gangs ever, Tren de Aragua, one of the most dangerous gangs you've ever seen. They go in, they take over entire communities, and we want them out of the country. And Venezuela wasn't taking them, so we had to find a place to send them, and he has the perfect place to send them. And that's a deal we cut with him back in early February, and this was the execution of it. We're very grateful.

And since then, we sent another group over there – not as big, but you look at the roster of people, the next – I think nine or ten that we sent. You see the rap sheet on some of these people, it's one of the worse collections of human beings I've ever seen in my life, and I'm glad they're no longer in the United States.

**QUESTION:** Well, watching the leftists try to defend these people, have them released – I mean, it's sort of wild. I can't imagine a civilization that could survive by releasing arguably some of the most violent people in history back into our streets. Have they just lost the plot so badly that this is their hill to die on?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, I think they're so triggered by everything that happens in terms of any sort of removal of people from the country, it's almost automatically assumed that if you are somehow removed from this country you are a candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize or you are

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some sort of – it's amazing. You read these articles; these are the greatest people who have ever lived, who just somehow all happen to be illegally in our country.

But it's a very simple and basic point: What country in the world would assume millions of people in a mass migration, not to mention thousands and thousands of people that you know are members of dangerous gangs and either have criminal records in their home country or here or are part of groups that commit crimes, who would – it's the stupidest thing I've ever heard that some country would want to keep them there. It would make all the – for a real everyday person in America, if you went to them and said, "Should we kick out people that are in here illegally and are dangerous criminals," that's, like, a no-brainer. That's got to be like a 90/10 issue in the United States, right?

**QUESTION:** The fact that there's even a 10 is shocking to me. I mean —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Right, or maybe it's even higher, right?

**QUESTION:** Yeah.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** But these guys consistently fall on the other side of it, right? They consistently fall on the other side of it. And what they're basically telling the American people is these people that are in our country illegally, and by the way are dangerous, somehow have the same rights if not more rights than everyday citizens in our country who are law-abiding, were born here or naturalized here or legal citizens of the United States – they basically have the same rights that you have.

It's the same issue with the student visas. We have this concept that's been built up that this is somehow a right that people are entitled to a visa. No one is entitled to come into the U.S. illegally, much less remain here, and no one is entitled to a visa. A visa – we deny visas every day all over the world because we think somebody might overstay, because we have questions about somebody.

So none of these things are right, so it's time – in addition to doing what's good for our country, it's an important opportunity to sort of reset reality on what these things actually are.

**QUESTION:** Yeah. I'd argue the Biden administration canceled plenty of visas of people that actually could be the next astronaut, the next nuclear physicist, the next – because

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they probably weren't reliable Democrat voters. But I think more importantly, as you and my father have both made very clear, gangs like Tren del Aragua – part of Maduro's narco-terrorist regime who've influenced violence on American citizens, murder, as well as the Venezuelan people – this isn't just a foreign problem; it's an American one, and it's right in our backyard. What else do people need to understand about how deep this really goes? Because this isn't just, hey, they got rid of a couple people. I mean, this – this seems to me like a serious op designed to really undermine and hurt America at the base level.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah. No, there was no doubt that it was used as a tool against us. I think mass migration's been weaponized against America. I think as the years go on, as the months go on, as we learn more about it, there'll be evidence and proof of that out there. There is no doubt there was a concerted effort, among other things. I mean, there was a lot of people already wanting to come for a lot of reasons. On top of that, I think you had a concerted effort to push people towards the United States. It's not unprecedented. In 1980, Fidel Castro opened up his mental institutions, he opened up his jails, and he basically flooded the United States with criminals from Cuba, and we paid an extraordinary price for it. So it's not unprecedented.

In the case of Tren de Aragua, that was a prison gang inside of Venezuela. The Venezuelan regime pushed them out of the country knowing that many of them – first of all, they destabilized all kind of countries neighboring in the region, but ultimately wound their way up here to the United States. And we saw that trend begin probably in January of 2023 we started to see uptick in people arriving.

It was actually Venezuelans that were telling me this. People here in the country, they were saying, look, these people that are coming now, they're members of gangs. And at first you kind of think, well, how do you really know? But they were right. They were absolutely right. And we started to see that. And you started to see them in the unlikeliest places. It wasn't like they were all coming to Miami. They actually were going to places like Chicago and New York and Aurora, Colorado, and sprinkled all over the country. And then the crimes began.

So there's no doubt that this was a concerted effort by the Maduro regime not just to drive these gang members out of their country but to drive them towards the United States and to inflict a price on this country. And it's not – it's right out of the Fidel Castro playbook.

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**QUESTION:** Yeah. Well, María Corina Machado won 92 percent of the vote there in an open primary despite brutal repression, censorship. I mean, I had her on the show two or three weeks ago. She was talking about – I mean, if she went to a restaurant – because she couldn't even fly, driving to a campaign stop – they'd shut down the restaurant for even serving her. I mean, she is clearly the choice of the Venezuelan people. She was banned from the ballot. But even her surrogate, Edmundo González, still won the election by 40 points. I mean, that's –

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah.

**QUESTION:** That's not like some of these things here where you say, hey, you won by basis points, where are the gains? I mean, that's pretty decisive even in that regime. Would you say the Venezuelan opposition today is more unified and credible than perhaps we've seen in the past, and that can actually effectuate real change going forward?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, they're as brave as they've ever been, and she in particular. María Corina Machado is an incredibly brave woman. I mean, if you – and I'm not criticizing anybody when I say this, right, but if you look at the Venezuelan opposition, a large percentage of the well-known figures in it are now living abroad, because there comes a time where your family's lives is threatened or they force you out of the country or you leave. You travel overseas to go give a speech and they don't let you back in. She has stayed. But she's in hiding. They're looking – they're hunting her down every day. Like, they're trying to get a hold of her, they've tried to arrest her a couple times. Incredible bravery. One of the bravest people in the world, and I don't think people know enough about her.

But you have to – people have to understand, I mean, being in the political opposition in Venezuela at this point is a life-threatening circumstance to be in. I mean, they will – they will put you in jail. They've jailed everybody around her, everybody – and these are not like normal jails. I mean, these are atrocious conditions that they're in.

So it's not a government. The Maduro regime is not a government. They govern territory because they have the guns and they have the security forces, but it basically is a narco-terrorist organization with strong ties to Iran, strong ties to narco-trafficking, and they just happen to control territory. They don't even control all of Venezuela because the border regions with Colombia are controlled – openly controlled – by narco-guerrilla terrorists.

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So yeah, I mean, if they had a real election in Venezuela, Maduro would lose – like he did – by a lot. But obviously, the way they stay in power is they kill and jail the people who don't agree with them.

**QUESTION:** Well, I know the Biden administration – I mean, these were regimes that were largely on the ropes until we shut down our own energy production, the Keystone Pipeline, and allowed Chevron to make a deal with the Maduro regime which gave them the cash that I'm sure was siphoned off and/or funneled through back to the regime to keep them in power. I mean, I can't think of a more glaring example of basically giving a lifeline to literally a terrorist dictator than what we saw in the past.

How do we reconcile that that even happened in America, despite sort of party differences? I mean, it's so flagrant, and the fact that the media won't even talk about that, won't even talk about this; but if we do anything here, they're so vocal about any kind of change in what was ultimately a failed policy that boosted up a dictator.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Look, in foreign policy we want to be mature and realistic about it. You're going to have to deal with some bad people, right? You're going to have to deal with people that you don't like, people that you don't agree with, but for the purposes of foreign policy, peace, and all that kind of thing, you have to deal with them, okay?

The problem is you can't do it in a stupid way, and that's what the Biden people did. They went to Maduro and they said, okay, we're going to do a deal. You promise to hold elections, free and fair elections in like nine months or whatever, and we will immediately lift sanctions and allow you to start producing oil and getting paid for it. It was a side deal, by the way, because they didn't – they only announced that they did this deal with Chevron. What they didn't announce was that Chevron – with a side, secret deal – was allowed to pay the Maduro regime royalties. It accounted for over 25 percent of all the revenue going into that regime from oil.

So they did that deal. Well, they didn't have – you talked about the election. The election was fake. They didn't have an election. And after that, after that, they left the deal in place. They left it in place, even though they violated their word on holding free and fair elections. I think the way – if they were going to do it – and I don't think at this point you can do it – you say first you have free and fair elections, then we'll lift the sanctions. And then we'll – but they – and even if you do

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it the way that the Biden people did, at least if they don't – if they break their word, undo the thing. Stop getting – allowing them to get money. But they didn't do any of that.

So I think it's one more example of stupidity in our foreign policy, which other countries look at and say, well, hell, they got away with that; we should – we could be able to get away with whatever we want as well. It's really both weakness and stupidity.

**QUESTION:** Yeah. I mean, I'm not a foreign policy wonk by any stretch, but I know enough about negotiation to say you don't give up all your leverage, you don't give the other side everything that they want before you get to the table to figure out what it is that you want. You keep maximum pressure on them so you can actually effectuate real policy changes.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah. Well, if I want to put it in real estate terms, you don't get to say, okay, pay me for the building and I get to keep the building anyways. (Laughter.) And that's pretty much the deal they made. It's like, here's all this money for your – we want to buy your hotel or your property. We're going to send you all this money for it. But by the way, you get to keep the hotel and the property. You get the money and the hotel. That's what these guys got. They got to keep their dictatorship and their deal, but obviously President Trump is a very different kind of president, and that's over now.

**QUESTION:** I agree. Mr. Secretary, can you talk about the impact of your successful leadership and what appears to be a broader pivot into the Western Hemisphere? We've seen comparisons to the Monroe Doctrine. Can you talk about the opportunities to shake up the foundations of communism in the Western Hemisphere and build strong, long-lasting American alliances in our backyard, whether it's with Bukele in El Salvador, Milei in Argentina, María Corina Machado in Venezuela hopefully eventually, and perhaps others? What does all of that look like to you?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah. Well, the baseline is the United States wants to be friends with our friends, right? So for a long time if you were a U.S. or pro-American ally in the region, we kind of ignored you and in some cases actually treated you bad. But if you were an irritant like Nicaragua or Cuba or Venezuela, then we made all these deals with you to make you happy, right? So we made deals with the people that hated us and we either neglected or sometimes were outright hostile towards the countries that were pro-American.

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So we've reversed all of that. And you – and look, maybe I'll miss a country here, but you talk about places like Guyana, Argentina, Paraguay, Costa Rica; the president of Panama is very pro-American, meaning he wants to be our ally and our partner; El Salvador, the Dominican Republic. So we've made a concerted effort to reach out to these countries that have governments and leaders that want to be aligned with the United States, not just on regional issues but international issues, and figure out a way – we want those democratically elected leaders to go back to their people and say, hey, there's benefits to being friends of America; here are the benefits.

At the same time, it allows us to clearly define the countries that have governments that are enemies of the United States, unfortunately, in Cuba, in Nicaragua, in – and obviously the regime in Venezuela. So we identify these. And then others, we've got some tough issues to work through, like with Mexico. On fairness, I think the Mexicans are doing more today against the cartels and against migration than they have ever, ever done ever before, and obviously the credit goes to President Trump for being very strong about that. But that's an example of how positive engagement has allowed us to get things – has allowed us to reach a level of cooperation with the Mexican Government that we never have had before under previous presidents.

**QUESTION:** How would you like to see that? Because, I mean, to me that's the biggest thing. I mean, we spend in trillions in Ukraine; it doesn't matter. We – I mean, it's not really a clear and present threat to us, we – all of those things. But, I mean, the Mexican border, whether it's, honestly, a lot of the stuff I'm sure you're probably dealing with on trade as well as the cartels, with the fentanyl trade coming across and then human trafficking and child sex trafficking – I love seeing Mexico do that. What more can we do to help bolster those efforts?

Because, I mean, I think if we look at it objectively, I imagine there's probably plenty of cartel infiltration into the Mexican military. You see about X number of presidential candidates in Mexico killed, likely by the cartels.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, yeah.

**QUESTION:** There is undue influence. It's not like a gang in California. These are very sophisticated, very well-funded paramilitary organizations at this point. How can we help bolster that? Because when I look at 100,000 Americans dying a year – two Vietnams a year – indiscriminately across the board with fentanyl, that seems to me like the most obvious clear and

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present danger to the United States of any foreign issue that we deal with, any war and any conflict.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, no, no doubt. So I think the first is to recognize what you just said, and that is – and I'll tell you why we recognize it. You're absolutely right. I mean, you have judges – like, let's talk about extraditions. There are people that are extraditable, like, they're wanted in the United States; they should be extradited. But they'll literally go to some corrupt judge and say, oh, that's not me, I'm not Jose Sanchez, I'm not Juan Ramirez, that's not me. And they spend 10 years in this process. And then you've got some people in that government that have been very – that want to get rid of those people, that want to take those on, and we just have to understand that in Mexico for those people to stand up and say I'm going to take on a drug cartel, it's not like you might lose the next election or be removed from office. It's like you might be beheaded. You might be killed. Your car might blow up. Your kids might and your family might be killed. Same with journalists that reveal all that.

So I think part of it is capacity building, meaning working with them. The Mexicans have capabilities. I mean, they're not – it's not a Third World country. I mean, they've got institutions there that we partner with. It's intelligence sharing, whether it's them alerting us, hey, these guys we think have crossed your border and they're operating in Tucson; or us letting them know, hey, there's a drug shipment or there's a human trafficking network moving across. Can you guys action that? So all of those sort of – all of that collaboration is going on right now as we speak, and it's more than it's ever been.

Now, there's more that needs to be done. And if you look at the border today, it's the most secure border we've probably ever had in my lifetime, that's for sure. I mean, there's just nobody crossing. In fact, one of the biggest problems we're facing or complaints we're hearing about now is that there are people that were headed here, coming up through Central America; they realized Trump won the election and he was actually serious. They made a U-turn and now they're kind of stuck in these countries along the way, whether it's Mexico or Guatemala, Honduras, whatever. They're making U-turns. So that has stopped, and I think that's – Mexicans deserve some credit for helping us on that front, because they've actually sent more national guard troops to the border than they ever have before.

Look, they've still got big problems. We've still got to deal with the fact that there are parts of Mexico where the drug cartels are way more powerful than the government. In fact, the

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government might not even be present there. They are the government. It's a huge undertaking and it requires – we have to work – it's not just an us issue. I mean, it's the Department of Defense, it's Kristi Noem in DHS, it's Tom Homan, it's all of these different elements of government that are partnering with the Mexicans. This is the closest we've ever worked with them. We have a lot more to do, but this is the closest we've worked with Mexicans, the Mexican authorities, on tackling this problem, and I think there's more to be done.

**QUESTION:** That's great. Meanwhile, I guess, the State Department – we talked about visas a little bit earlier, but you guys have been sort of aggressively confronting visa holders tied to terror groups and extremism. It's sort of shocking to me that that was never done before. You would think that would be a pretty serious red flag, but apparently it wasn't. Only people who buy MAGA hats and/or Bibles would be targeted by the Biden administration. Can you lay out perhaps your mission and priorities as it relates to foreign national here on visas who are acting against America's interests?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah. So if you go right now to a window somewhere in an embassy and apply for a United States visa, there's all kinds of reasons why we won't allow you to come in: because we think you might overstay your visa, because we don't like or have questions about some of your political activities and your views. We just won't give you a visa proactively, on the front end. My argument is if we identify people like that who we would not have given a visa to, had we known information, but now they've got a visa and now they're here and we know the information, shouldn't we ask them to leave as a result of it? In essence, if we wouldn't – if there are things about you that had we known we would not have given you a visa, we should be taking away your visa. It's as simple as that.

There's no – no one's entitled to a visa. I mean, there are all kinds of reasons why people get denied. There are people that can't tell you why their visa was denied; they just don't know. It's just we – we're not taking more people from that country, or we just – whatever it may be. So I think, at the end of the day, that's what we're trying to do right now, is we're trying to go and identify people who we have information about who, had we known that information, we never would have given them a visa. And we're revoking those visas, and they have to leave.

Now, I think everyone would tell you this – if you told me I'm applying for a student visa so I can attend a university, and while I'm at your university I'm going to become a member in support of

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or even participate in groups that are going to take over libraries, spray paint monuments, start riots, bang drums all day and night, harass Jewish students – if you told me you were going to be linked to any of that stuff, we never should have given you the visa. Now that you're doing it, we should take away your visa. And that's what we're trying to do and that's what we are doing.

I know it's a lot of work, but we – it's something I wanted to do when I was a U.S. senator. I've been talking about this for two and a half years. I think it's the craziest thing I've ever seen. What country in the world – how stupid, how ridiculous is it for some country to say, "Yes, bring more people to our country that are going to disrupt and create riots in our streets and on our campuses." Who would do that? It's idiotic, and we're not doing idiotic things anymore.

**QUESTION:** Yeah. You would think that one of the major disqualifications would be on the application, if you withheld your true intentions for being there, that in and of itself would be disqualifying. And that's clearly what so many of these people are doing. They're coming in under a guise of being a student, but they're far more active in their role as activists for hate than they are actually trying to be students.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** That's right. And look, I mean, at the end of the day one thing is you're a U.S. citizen, you go on campus, you get wrapped up in these movements – it's very unfortunate, and I think that's a societal problem we have to confront as a country, like why are the citizens of the most prosperous and freest country in the history of the world raising kids that are turning out to hate the country that made all of this possible. But another thing is to say: And by the way, we're also going to invite people into our country as guests who are going to join and foment these movements. It just makes no sense to me.

By the way, that's not the only visas that are getting revoked. That's – like if you have a DUI – if you're here on a student visa and you have a DUI or you have some other crime, that's an automatic suspension. And they weren't doing that; that wasn't happening. That should be automatic. You commit a crime while you're in this country; your visa's gone. You didn't tell us you were coming here to break the law; you told us you were coming here to study and then go back to your country. And if they're not doing that, that should be the end of the visa. And that was something that wasn't being enforced either.



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**QUESTION:** Yeah. And it's not like there's not precedent for that, right? I mean, you can't get into Canada if you've had a DUI. I mean, you can't lie about an application to go to Mexico on your passports. It feels like we've had the most lax immigration laws as probably the country that most people around the world would want to get into, and yet we don't even hold ourselves to the similar standard of our neighbors and, frankly, everyone else around the world.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah. No one else does it this way. No one else does it this way. We're the ones that – I think something has built up in the American mentality that somehow coming to America is a right, that everybody on Earth has a right to come to America legally or illegally if they want. And that's just not true. That's never been true. But that certainly can't be the standard, certainly not the legal standard. And it also makes no sense.

You – every country in the world has to be able to control who comes in, when they come in, why they came in. We have to have standards for all of that. And then you have to enforce those standards. And we just – we've just completely lost focus on that, and instead sort of created this mentality that I think really spanned both parties, that we should just allow anyone who wants to come in to come in, that our default position is yes, come in, and we'll figure it out later. And that can't be our default position anymore.

And by the way, you explain this to foreign countries – they completely understand. At least privately they completely understand.

**QUESTION:** They're all doing it. They may be outraged because they want to get rid of their —

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, and the ones —

**QUESTION:** — less than desirables. But I don't think we can be the world's dumping grounds for criminals and murderers. I always talk about the statistics under the Biden – 13,000 murderers. I mean, that's Joe Biden's ICE. They knew they were murderers and let them in.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah.

**QUESTION:** Sixteen thousand rapists and sex offenders; 600,000 criminals overall. I mean, that's insane. They knew it and we're like, "Eh, it's okay." Spread out 16,000 rapists amongst the 4,000 counties in America, four rapists per county in America. I mean,

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it doesn't seem like that would go well. It's 3.6 murderers per county around the country. What good could possibly come from these things?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** No, nothing good comes up. But it just tells you we just completely – policymaking in America became completely detached from common sense, completely detached from reality. We sort of adopted this mentality that we're welcoming – everyone who wants to come in, come in.

You know who else had that mentality? A bunch of countries in Western Europe that now deeply, deeply regret it. The Germans made the decision let everybody in, let everybody in. And now everybody in Germany is like – and all over Europe is like, okay, we made a big mistake here. Obviously, we're a bigger country, but we've made similar mistakes, right? And we can't let that continue to happen.

**QUESTION:** Well, I mean, Europe feels like it's over. And it feels like they're – actually recognize that, and they can't really do much about it. But we've had our own issues here as well. I mean, I know under the previous administration, the State Department made DEI 20 percent of Foreign Service officer performance. I mean, DEI – I don't know what that has to do with Foreign Service officer performance. But what did you find out as you got in there, and what are you doing to fix the issue of that? Because none of that seems accretive to anything that the State Department would actually need to be doing.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah. I think what you find is that you end up sort of losing focus on promoting people on the basis of merit. And we have very good, talented people here that never got promoted or got stuck in mid-level ranks. I mean, they have to wait 25 years to be an ambassador somewhere, or 30 years. And then it's all because of some – how some supervisor judged you based on some scorecard.

It's like anything else. People are – you're going to get what you reward. You're going to get what you value. It's the reason why we keep – why we score tests. It's the reason why we have points in sports. We want to know who won and we want to know – we want to reward good behavior. We want to award good – we want to reward good qualities and we want to diminish bad ones.

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So we're changing that standard. We want to promote people within the State Department on the basis of how good they are at their job. And there are different jobs people do here. Some people are on Consular Affairs, which are the ones that review visas. Some people are diplomats or economic officers, whatever it may be. But we want people rewarded on how competent they are, how good they are at their job. And frankly, what I think that opens the door to is the ability to promote people that maybe have been here 10 years instead of 25, but really are better than the people that have been here 25 years. You know what I mean?

I mean, otherwise, you start to lose talented workforce. Imagine you're in the Foreign Service. You're there for 12 years. You realize there's another 10 years before I get promoted to anything. And by the way, it all depends on how somebody judged me on some scorecard about whether I hit some DEI metrics. So we're getting rid of that in terms of how we judge and analyze our workforce, and I think it's going to give us a more accurate way to promote people. I think it's going to help us with recruiting. I think we're going to be able to —

**QUESTION:** Yeah. Oh, and people need to know that they have a chance. If you have good talent, to your point, they don't want to know – and you've probably dealt with this in Congress; I saw that all the time. It's like people who have no business being on the most prestigious committees end up on these committees because they've been there longer and therefore have some sort of tenure, but they're making trillion-dollar decisions about something that they don't understand, whereas a freshman congressman, senator may end up there but they – their life's work was exactly that. So they actually know what they're talking about, but they have no chance of ending up in these places.

So it's really hard to recruit talent if they know that they may be more qualified than the people that are going to get that job and they've got to sit there for 25 years, not because they don't deserve it but because they just haven't been there long enough.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, and understand, like, nobody goes into the Foreign Service thinking they're going to become millionaires working for the U.S. Government. They do it because they want to be involved in foreign policy, they want to get around the world or what have you. But I think we're going to have trouble attracting people to that career, and I think we're going to have trouble retaining people in that career, given all the other opportunities that now exist out there, if they don't see a pathway to fulfillment, professional fulfillment.

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**QUESTION:** Yeah.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** And so I think that's going to help us do that, but I also think it's going to help us place the right people in the right places, because we're going to be judging them on the basis of how good they are at their job, which really should be how we make decisions about everything. I always go back to sports. If you think about it, I mean, how do we judge who gets to – who's on a team or who gets to play? And it's basically very simple, and that is your performance in practice and in games that determine ultimately who you put on the field or on the court or whatever it may be. And that's how we need to do it at all levels, including here in government.

**QUESTION:** Well, yeah, I'm glad that you're making that change. But how do you see all of that – whether it's the DEI stuff, et cetera – how does all of that tie into the scandal surrounding USAID? What's the status of USAID today? Is it gone? Is what's left of it now kind of completely within your authority to oversee? I know you've assembled a tough and courageous team, including top deputy Chris Landau, Acting Under Secretary Darren Beattie, who's been on this show many times, and others. What's it all mean and how do we combat sort of that years of just insanity, actually?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, I think that foreign aid is something that we need to do and we're going to continue to do, but every dollar we spend in foreign aid has to achieve at least one of three objectives. It has to make America stronger, it has to make America more prosperous, or it has to make America safer. If the program doesn't do one of those three things, it may be a great cause and I encourage the Gates Foundation or charities all over the world to take it up, but it has to be one of those three things.

I think the other big mistake that happened with foreign aid is we turned it into a tool to export our domestic policies of the far left, right? So the far left decided these are things that we think are good and it also became cultural imperialism. We began to use foreign aid not as a way to make America stronger, safer, more prosperous, but as a way to impose – impose – the domestic political agenda of the left onto foreign countries. And it became a vehicle for that.

I think the third thing that developed over time is what I call the foreign aid industrial complex. And I'm talking about dozens and dozens of these nongovernmental organizations, these NGOs, that were raking in hundreds of millions of dollars to run these programs on behalf

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of the U.S. Government. And it came out – and this is not me; Samantha Power would have said this – you have to spend – in order to get \$12 million to people directly, you have to spend \$100 million. You have to spend 100 million to get 12 million out to – directly, because you have to pay the NGO and then the subcontractor then the sub-sub and the sub-sub-sub. And before you know it, you're paying Hamas to hand out food or whatever. And that has to stop and that has to end.

So we conducted a review of 6,000 programs, almost 6,000 programs, at USAID. We identified close to 900 that we are going to continue to do, either in their current form or amended. We canceled 5,000-some of those contracts, and now the goal is to bring all of those programs under the State Department so that we can directly review – because remember, USAID was separate from the State Department. They did whatever they wanted.

**QUESTION:** Yeah. Well, it feels like that was on purpose, right? Once it's at the NGO level, all of a sudden there's no oversight, so who knows where that money is going? I've always wondered, as you watch – that stuff gets discovered by DOGE, and within three days the top seven people at Act Blue, the big Democrat fundraising apparatus, all of a sudden magically disappear. And I've always wondered for years: How is it that they're raising 5x for every congressional seat that – what we can run, how is it that they're raising 10x on some of them? Do you think there's any ties there to this money basically just being kicked back to Democrat – the fundraising apparatus and/or other shady things? Because I – I just don't believe in enough coincidence anymore to believe that was just – magically happened at the same time.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Well, some of that's been referred to the Justice Department to look at, but what I can tell you most definitely is that there are people that have made a lot of money by being part of the foreign aid industrial complex, by being part of this network of NGOs who do things. And then some of it, frankly, just didn't make any sense, right? Like you – I just came back from a trip to the Caribbean where I went to Jamaica, I went to Guyana, and I went to Suriname – the Caribbean Basin. And their number one complaint is that USAID-funded NGOs didn't partner with government, right? And then – and you can even go to embassies.

By the way, this is not really well understood. There's always been tension between State Department and USAID, because there's some ambassador that's like, okay, I'm trying to get – we're trying to get good relations. The foreign policy of the U.S. is to have good relations with the

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leader of this country. And then USAID, operating out of their embassy, is, like, funding the political opposition of that leader that —

**QUESTION:** Yeah, or, like, trans Elmo in places where let's just say that's not as popular as it is in California.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Another example, right, these sorts of things that you see. But in the case of the Caribbean, it's like, okay, they want to spend all this money on these literacy programs out in the countryside — which we're not against as a government — we're fine with that. The problem is that we can't even get to those schools, kids can't even go to school, until we first, like, get rid of the gangs that are threatening kids from going to school. So our number one priority, if you want to help us, help us with what we need. Don't help us with what you want, which is to get into these rural schools, where now you start indoctrinating people on the social priorities of the far left in the United States. It's part of that exporting of it.

So we're going to realign foreign aid, so we're actually going to be helping countries with what they generally need. And a lot of these countries, it's security assistance. What they want to do is they want to be able to build up police departments and security forces so they can become self-sufficient at taking on these gangs and not require foreign aid in the future. The best foreign aid is foreign aid that ultimately ends because it's successful, because you go in, you help somebody, they build up their capacity, and now they can handle it themselves, and they don't need foreign aid anymore. That's what foreign aid should be geared towards, not perpetual — these programs exist for 25 years. If a foreign aid program has been going on for 25 years, it has not achieved its purpose because it hasn't solved the problem.

**QUESTION:** I think that's very well said. I think, unfortunately, that machine wants to keep those people employed in whatever else they're doing. So, yeah, that's what I was wondering, sort of a — it felt like one big sort of gift, kickback apparatus. Perhaps it's incompetence, but I don't believe that either. I think these people have been very well entrenched, so I'm really glad to see you taking all of that on.

So as we wrap, because I know your time is a little limited today, I do want to say just what an incredible job I think you're doing with this.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Oh, thank you.



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**QUESTION:** It's been so great to see this cabinet, people just getting together, not sort of taking on the positions that they would have otherwise. And I think even your worldview – JD's worldview, so many of these guys – probably has really evolved over the last 10 years. I'd love to hear how you see that happening but also how you'd like to sort of assess the almost first 100 days, and what do you see in store for the next 100?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah. First of all, on your worldview – our worldview should always be under examination because the world is constantly changing. Like, anyone who has the same worldview today that they had 15 years ago is lost, because the world looks nothing like it did 15 years ago. So as circumstances change, the way you approach the world has to change. We're different – we're in a very different era. Fifteen, 20 years ago, we were the sole uni-power force in the world. We took on a lot of causes because nobody else could. The world looks a little different right now for a lot of different reasons. So I think it's been a very busy – clearly, like I was just saying before we went on the air here with this, that every day here feels like six months' worth of work on every front.

**QUESTION:** Yeah.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** As you know, the President is pushing very hard on every front to get everything done, and I think he has two advantages. The first is he was president, so it's been the fastest transition you've ever seen because this is not – there was no on-the-job learning here. It was go.

I think the team is also a very good team of people that have known each other for a long time. I mean, I look at this cabinet meeting, I look around the room; I've known almost everyone in that room for at least a decade, and you have had relationships with them even before they were in government. I mean, Pete Hegseth I've known for a long time. You name it. And you go – Pam Bondi's from Florida. I've know her for almost 20 years. These are people you've worked with before, and they're all aligned with the President's vision.

I think the first time, in the first term, not to be critical of anybody, but I think the President, he wins the election and then he sort of said – they sort of bring in people and say, look, these are the people in the Republican Party that do this kind of stuff. I think now, having the advantage of having been there before and so forth, he had the ability to put together a team of people who are responsive to the President's tasking to the extent that it's not even a problem, to the extent

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that what I'd say what has been challenge is the challenge is we're moving so fast, there's so much to do, everyone is so eager to deliver, that you need 26 or 27 hours in the day, because we work for someone that apparently has found a way to fit 27 hours in a 24-hour day in terms of how he works.

And so – but it's exciting to be a part of. You – we truly feel like we are making changes and decisions today in the positions we're in that are going to dramatically improve our country and life in America for two generations. Like, we feel like we're about – on achieving that, not just here in the State Department but on matters of trade, international relations, domestic economics, rebuilding our industrial capacity. And I think the President has assembled a great team to do it, and obviously he's always – he's always pushing hard, as you know better than anyone. It doesn't – what have you done – it's what you did yesterday doesn't matter.

**QUESTION:** It doesn't matter how many wins you rack up.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Exactly. (Laughter.)

**QUESTION:** If you get that call at 6:00 a.m., “What have you done for me lately, Marco?”

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** That's right. Why are we not undefeated? And why didn't we win by 20 instead of 15? We got the championship, oh, but why didn't we win by 20 or 25? And it's good. That's the way you push the envelope and that's the way you achieve excellence.

**QUESTION:** Well, Secretary Rubio, thank you so much for the time. I really appreciate it. Keep up the great work. I look forward to seeing so many more great things coming out of the State Department and so much more. Thank you.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah. Awesome. Thank you. Thanks for having me on.

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## DHS to Begin Screening Aliens' Social Media Activity for Antisemitism

Release Date : 04/09/2025

**WASHINGTON—** Today U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will begin considering aliens' antisemitic activity on social media and the physical harassment of Jewish individuals as grounds for denying immigration benefit requests. This will immediately affect aliens applying for lawful permanent resident status, foreign students and aliens affiliated with educational institutions linked to antisemitic activity.

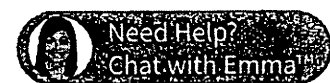
Consistent with President Trump's executive orders on [Combatting Anti-Semitism](#), [Additional Measures to Combat Anti-Semitism](#) and [Protecting the United States from Foreign Terrorists and Other National Security and Public Safety Threats](#), DHS will enforce all relevant immigration laws to the maximum degree, to protect the homeland from extremists and terrorist aliens, including those who support antisemitic terrorism, violent antisemitic ideologies and antisemitic terrorist organizations such as Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, Hezbollah, or Ansar Allah aka: "the Houthis."

"There is no room in the United States for the rest of the world's terrorist sympathizers, and we are under no obligation to admit them or let them stay here," said DHS Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs Tricia McLaughlin. "Sec. Noem has made it clear that anyone who thinks they can come to America and hide behind the First Amendment to advocate for anti-Semitic violence and terrorism – think again. You are not welcome here."

Under this guidance, USCIS will consider social media content that indicates an alien endorsing, espousing, promoting, or supporting antisemitic terrorism, antisemitic terrorist organizations, or other antisemitic activity as a negative factor in any USCIS discretionary analysis when adjudicating immigration benefit requests. This guidance is effective immediately.

For more information on USCIS and its programs, please visit [uscis.gov](https://uscis.gov) or follow us on [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

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# Secretary of State Marco Rubio with Ben Shapiro on the Ben Shapiro Show

INTERVIEW

MARCO RUBIO, SECRETARY OF STATE

WASHINGTON, D.C

APRIL 17, 2025

**QUESTION:** Joining us on the line, Secretary of State Marco Rubio. Secretary Rubio, thanks so much for joining the show. Really appreciate it.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Thank you. Thanks for having me on.

**QUESTION:** So let's talk about this major move that you just made at the State Department getting rid of a big chunk of the censorship bureaucracy that had been created and pushed a while back but then exacerbated over the course of the last few years, hidden. What's the story with what you are doing over at the State Department to get rid of the body formerly known as the Global Engagement Center?

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, I think you have to understand the history behind it. It's real brief. They started it by saying al-Qaida, ISIS, all these terrible groups are radicalizing people online, we should do something about it. Back when they came up with that 12 years ago, whatever it was, people were like, well, whatever, it makes sense.

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And then it metastasized and it's like, oh, there's foreign interference in our elections, we need to start going after that. Well then, by 2020, it became a moment to go after voices inside of American politics and begin to label people. And they put a guy in charge who basically was going around saying Trump is – Trump speaks just like these foreign terrorists, his supporters speak just like these foreign terrorists – so now you have an individual running a State Department entity that was labeling American speech by Americans as foreign interference.

And then really, the kicker was not only were they doing all that formally from the State Department, but they were taking State Department money and they were giving it to these third-party groups who are supposed to be like independent, verified arbiters of what's true and what isn't, what's good and what's bad. And these groups were deliberately targeting – I believe you were one of the ones they targeted, I think the Federalist – began putting labels on people.

Now you may say okay, "Well, what's the importance of a label?" Well, that's not just the issue here. The issue is not only did they put labels on people; that was then used to go to social media companies, it was used to go to outlets and say you have to deplatform these people or you have to cut back on how much views they're getting, you have to go after them – in essence, silence them.

So in essence, it metastasized and the metamorphosis into a government-run entity that was targeting political speech in America, labeling it disinformation, and silencing it – all paid for by the American taxpayers directly and indirectly. And that ends.

So what happened when we took – right before we took over, they got rid of this Global Engagement Center, they renamed it, and moved it somewhere else. But renaming something doesn't change it; you still leave the thing around.

So we've undertaken 12 weeks of looking how do we reorganize this whole thing, how do we get rid of it, how do we – and that's what we're announcing today is we're taking the whole thing down. And it's about \$50 million. I mean, it's not a small amount of money. And we're not going to be in the business of doing this anymore. In fact, we're going to be in the business of promoting free speech in America and around the world as a core American value, and that really is what we're going to be about right now.

And we're also going to go back and look at, as an accountability project, all of the instances in which this was used as a weapon against American political voices. And the reason why that's

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important is not just because of accountability; it's to make sure it never happens again. You document these things so that someone in the future, when they get some bright idea like this, realize why we shouldn't do it, because this is what it turns into.

**QUESTION:** And Secretary Rubio, it's a really good object lesson in what happens with some of these government agencies which started off decades ago with the right purposes and then gradually are infiltrated by people with a significant political partisan agenda, who then proceed to weaponize these institutions against Americans. We've seen this in USAID.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Correct.

**QUESTION:** Obviously we see this here with the GEC turned into another sort of body that was then hidden inside these agencies. I mean, when people like President Trump talk about the deep state, this is the kind of stuff that he's talking about.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah. So USAID is another great example. Humanitarian aid – it was created for development and humanitarian aid. Where it really went off the rails is when humanitarian aid and development aid was turned into: How do we infuse domestic political priorities into what we fund around the world? So when it became a domestic political priority to take on transgender rights, now all of a sudden you've got programs by Americans couched as humanitarian or development aid in other countries around the world. In essence, they injected domestic political considerations into foreign aid, and the result is now it has to be rolled back. So it's another example.

We're going to continue to do humanitarian aid. What we're not going to do is use humanitarian aid to spread a domestic ideological movement globally. We're not going to do that.

**QUESTION:** Secretary Rubio, obviously this is a – it's a big move by the State Department. You've been making a lot of moves over at the State Department that are different than your predecessor's. That includes moves to get out of the United States people who are terrorist supporters, not just people who say bad things but people who are actual terrorist supporters, act in ways that are conducive to actual terror groups.

I wanted to give you a moment to sort of explain the approach that the State Department is taking in taking a look at, for example, student visa holders.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Right.

KAT POLLOCK

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**QUESTION:** What are the standards that are being used to determine whether somebody should stay in the United States or should go? Because obviously opponents of the administration are arguing it's violations of free speech, people have the ability to say what they want. That's not an argument that the administration is actually arguing with. The administration is not trying to crack down on free speech. You're trying to actually stop something else.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah. Well, let's start with a baseline, okay? No one is entitled to a student visa to enter the United States. No one. It's not a constitutional right. It's not a law. Every day, consular officers on the ground in face-to-face interviews are denying people visas for all kinds of reasons – because we think you're going to overstay, because we think your family member is a member of a drug ring, whatever it may be. We deny visas every day all over the world. No one is entitled to a visa. Let's start with that, because I hear some of this reporting out there like if somehow we – you're allowed to have a visa unless we can come up with a reason why you shouldn't have one. That's not true. The burden of proof is the other way.

Now, let's say you go to a window somewhere in the world and say, "I want to go to the United States to study at a university," and as part of that interview it comes out you think Hamas is actually a good group. We probably would not let you in. I would hope we wouldn't let you in. Okay?

But let's say we don't ask you that question and you get into the U.S. on a student visa, and all of a sudden it becomes obvious you think Hamas is a good group. Well, then we should revoke your visa. In essence, if we would have denied – if we had learned things about you once you're here that would have caused us to deny you a visa when you were overseas, that's grounds for revocation. It is not in the national interest of the United States, it's not in our foreign policy interest, it's not in our national security interest, to invite people onto our university campuses who are not just going to go there to study physics or engineering but who are also going to go there to foment movements that support and excuse foreign terrorist organizations who are committed to the destruction of the United States and the killing and the raping and the kidnapping of innocent civilians, not just in Israel but anywhere they can get their hands on them. That's not in our national interest.

So we have a right to deny visas before you get here, and we have a right to revoke them if we believe that your presence in our country undermines our national interest, our national security, and our foreign policy. And that's what we intend to do.

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Now listen, there are other student visas that are being canceled that have nothing to do with us, by the way. And that has to do with someone, for example, who is here on a student visa and has a DUI. And I don't know - that's not us. That's DHS. But I don't know if people realize if you commit a crime while you're in the U.S., that's an automatic grounds for revoking your visa. And no one was ever doing it. They weren't doing it. They weren't cross-referencing the system. Now they're starting to do that.

So that's the majority of these, but we have identified - I can't tell you the exact number because it's static and it's constantly moving, but when someone is presented to me and it's clear that this person is a supporter of a foreign terrorist organization, we're going to remove them from the country. You're not going to be here; it's just that simple. What a stupid thing, what a ridiculous thing, to invite people in your country so they can be part of these movements that are terrorizing fellow students, tearing up campuses, shutting down campuses. We have campuses in America that couldn't even operate for weeks. People couldn't go to class. Are we - are we crazy? What other country in the world would allow this? We shouldn't allow it.

**QUESTION:** Secretary Rubio, I think that the controversy that's arisen over, for example, the detention of Mahmoud Khalil, who is one of the students at Columbia University who has a green card but who was also engaged in protest activities that violated the law, who obviously was sympathizing openly with terror attacks by Hamas and all the rest of this, that the sort of controversy here, there's a common thread to the opposition to the Trump Administration on this stuff, which is, as you mentioned, this bizarre idea that people are somehow owed entry to the United States.

I think that ties in very strongly to the Democrats' new approach to what's going on with this Salvadoran migrant who's now been deported to El Salvador. The administration has taken a legal position that basically, now that he's in Salvadoran custody, that it's up to the Salvadorans whether to return this person to the United States or not for further due process concerns.

But that's really not the case that's being made by opponents of the administration. Many of the opponents of the administration are making a more significant case, which is the idea that basically, if you get into the United States, you are somehow owed a permanent status in the United States. And you're seeing this across the board, ranging from the Trump Administration's moves to get rid of temporary protected status for people who have entered en masse under the Biden administration, to the resistance to DHS or the State Department making moves with regard to the tens of millions, possibly, of illegal immigrants who have brought into the country

AMERICAN



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by the Biden administration. There is this bizarre supposition that everyone on Earth is somehow owed passage to the United States and permanent membership in our society.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Yeah, and I think it explains to you why we have the immigration crisis that we had. And it was the belief – they would all say we believe we should have immigration laws, of course, but if you get into the United States you should be allowed to stay; if you make it here illegally, no matter how you got here, then you should be allowed to stay. I mean, I think that that mindset that's being revealed in these cases tells you how you get 12, 13, 14, 20 million people entering the country unlawfully and illegally over the last few years, because of this mindset that, yeah, we have immigration laws, but we don't really mean it; once you get in, you should be allowed to stay here indefinitely, and we have some sort of obligation to accommodate you here in the country. That's how you create this mindset that led to that crisis, and people know it.

It's all incentive based. People believed under Joe Biden – rightfully, they believed – if I could just get across the border, I'm going to get to stay. And in 90-something percent of the cases they were absolutely right, and that's why more people kept coming. There's a reason why no one's coming now. You know one of the problems I'm facing right now with countries in Central America and the Western Hemisphere? U-turns. A lot of people were headed here, they realized Trump was serious, they made a U-turn, and now these countries are complaining, oh, they're stuck in my country. Well, you facilitated their transit for years. And now they're stuck with them as a result of it.

But that's actually happening. Why? Because the incentives are no longer to come; the incentives are not to come. It's been successful. It's the most secure border we've had in my lifetime, I mean, if you just think about it. And it's not just because there are people there. It's because people aren't coming anymore because they know that the President is serious about enforcing our immigration laws.

**QUESTION:** Well, Secretary of State Marco Rubio, really appreciate your time. Thanks for what you're doing inside the State Department to get rid of shadow organizations designed to crack down on free speech, as well as to move people out of the United States who actually don't like America very much. Secretary of State Rubio, thanks so much for stopping by.

**SECRETARY RUBIO:** Thank you. Thanks for having me.

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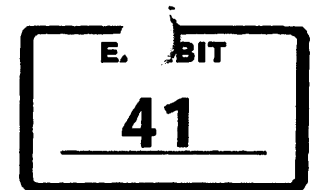
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**Tricia McLaughlin**

@TriciaOhio



When you advocate for violence, glorify and support terrorists that relish the killing of Americans and harass Jews, that privilege should be revoked and you should not be in this country.

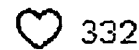
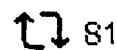
We have the law, facts and commonsense on our side.

No judge, not this one or another, is going to stop the Trump Administration from restoring the rule of law to our immigration system.

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Federal court rules Rümeysa Öztürk must be transferred to Vermont to challenge immigration detention : NPR



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## Federal court rules Rümeysa Öztürk must be transferred to detention in Vermont

UPDATED MAY 7, 2025 · 1:36 PM ET



Sergio Martínez-Beltrán



People take part in a rally and a protest in solidarity with Rumeysa Ozturk and Mohsen Mahdawi outside New York Federal Court as the court hears the U.S. government request to appeal the decisions in their cases in New York, United States on May 06, 2025.

Mostafa Bassim/Anadolu via Getty Images

A federal appeals court in New York Wednesday ordered the Trump administration to transfer Rümeysa Öztürk, a Tufts University doctoral student, from Louisiana to

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Federal court rules Rûmeysa Öztürk must be transferred to Vermont to challenge immigration detention : NPR

Vermont to continue her immigration detention in that state while a judge there decides whether to release her on bail.

The Trump administration has one week to comply with the transfer, a three-judge panel of the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled.

"The District of Vermont is likely the proper venue to adjudicate Öztürk's habeas petition because, at the time she filed, she was physically in Vermont," the panel wrote in its ruling.

#### Sponsor Message

Öztürk has been detained at a federal facility in Louisiana after being arrested on the street in Somerville, Massachusetts on March 25 by six federal plainclothes immigration agents. The Department of Homeland Security later accused her of engaging "in activities in support of Hamas."

Last year she wrote an opinion essay in a university paper criticizing the school for its handling of a handful of resolutions passed by the student senate related to the Israel-Hamas war in Gaza, including one calling on the university's president to acknowledge and condemn "the Ongoing Genocide in Gaza."

Her attorneys say she's being held in violation of her free speech and due process rights and that the government has not shown any evidence she supports terrorism. She has not been charged with any crime.

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Federal court rules Rümeysa Öztürk must be transferred to Vermont to challenge immigration detention : NPR

"No one should be arrested and locked up for their political views," said Esha Bhandari with the ACLU, which is representing her in federal court. "We're grateful the court refused the government's attempt to keep her isolated from her community and her legal counsel as she pursues her case for release."

In a statement to NPR, DHS Assistant Secretary Tricia McLaughlin said having a visa to live and study in the U.S. "is a privilege not a right."

"Today's ruling does not prevent the continued detention of Ms. Ozturk, and we will continue to fight for the arrest, detention, and removal of aliens who have no right to be in this country," McLaughlin said.

In court documents, the Trump administration has claimed that ICE sent Öztürk and other students to Louisiana because there was not enough detention space in immigration facilities where they were arrested.

But a federal judge in Massachusetts found earlier last month that there were detention beds available in Maine, a state closer to Vermont than Louisiana.

Wednesday's ruling by the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals is a win for Öztürk. Legal experts have said that fighting deportation is more challenging in Louisiana than in Vermont. Any appeal from the southern state would be considered by the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals, one of the most conservative courts in the nation.

Öztürk's attorneys say she suffers from asthma attacks that have worsened in detention.

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Federal court rules Rümeysa Öztürk must be transferred to Vermont to challenge immigration detention : NPR

She is one of several international students arrested by the Trump administration as part of its crackdown on foreign students who express what the administration claims is support for terrorism and create a hostile environment for Jewish students.

A federal judge in Vermont has scheduled a bail hearing for Öztürk for Friday.

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## The White House is one step closer to defunding public radio.

The House has voted to claw back all federal funding for public media, and the proposal now moves to the Senate.

We're running out of time to protect public radio's essential news, music, and emergency broadcast services to communities across the nation.

Those in rural areas — with few other options to get their news and information — will likely be the hardest hit.

But you can still stand up for public radio.

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The consequences of this vote fall directly on the Americans who rely on local, independent stations serving communities across the country. Take action.

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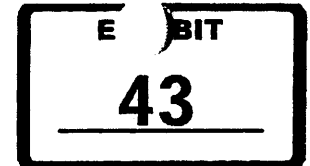
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**Secretary Marco Rubio** 🇺🇸 📌

@SecRubio



We are reviewing the visa status of the trespassers and vandals who took over Columbia University's library.

Pro-Hamas thugs are no longer welcome in our great nation.

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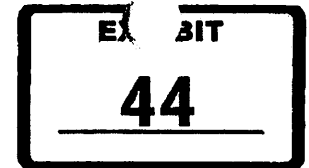
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Tricia McLaughlin

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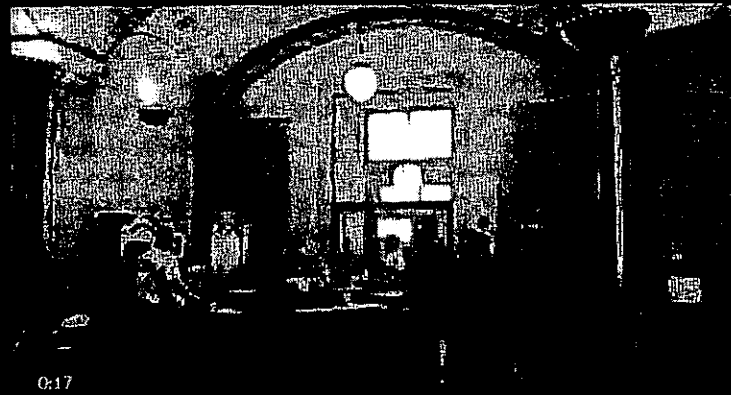
Act like it.

If you are pushing Hamas propaganda, glorifying terrorists that relish the killing of Americans, harassing Jews, taking over buildings, or other anti-American actions that we have seen lately on these campuses, you can book yourself a ticket home. You can expect your visa will be revoked.

Eden Yedegar

RIGHT NOW AT COLUMBIA: Masked anti-Israel students just broke into the library during finals week.

Columbia Public Safety unsuccessfully attempted to stop them.

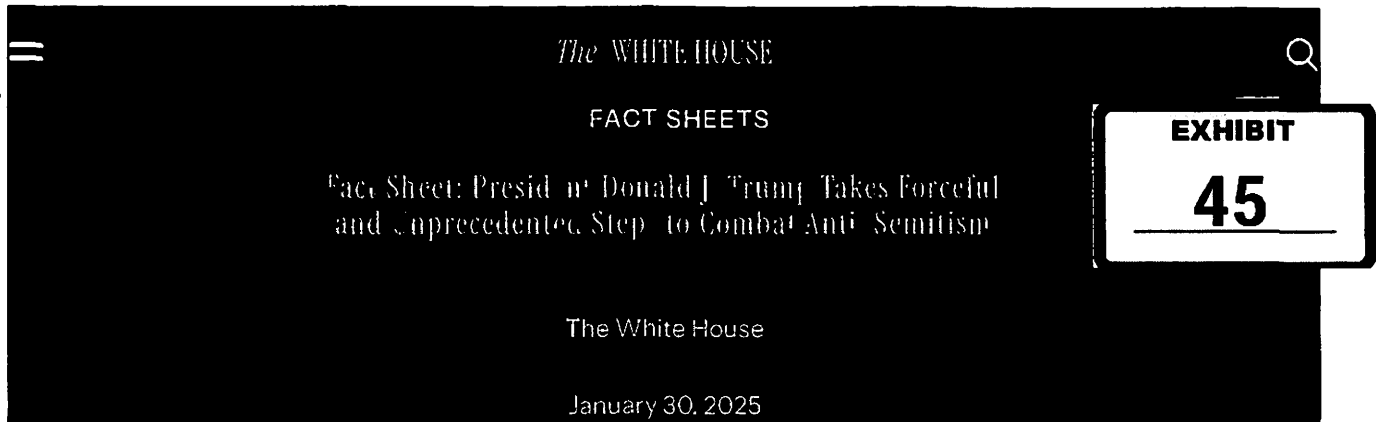


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Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Takes Forceful and Unprecedented Steps to Combat Anti-Semitism – The White House



**COMBATING ANTI-SEMITISM IN THE UNITED STATES:** Today, President Donald J. Trump signed an Executive Order to Combat Anti-Semitism.

- Expanding on his Executive Order 13899, President Trump's new Order takes forceful and unprecedented steps to marshal all Federal resources to combat the explosion of anti-Semitism on our campuses and in our streets since October 7, 2023.
- Every Federal executive department and agency leader will review and report to the White House within sixty days on *all* criminal and civil authorities and actions available for fighting anti-Semitism.
- Immediate action will be taken by the Department of Justice to protect law and order, quell pro-Hamas vandalism and intimidation, and investigate and punish anti-Jewish racism in leftist, anti-American colleges and universities.
- The Order demands the removal of resident aliens who violate our laws.

**GOING ON OFFENSE TO ENFORCE LAW AND ORDER AND TO PROTECT CIVIL**

**RIGHTS:** Immediately after the jihadist terrorist attacks against the people of Israel on October 7, 2023, pro-Hamas aliens and left-wing radicals began a campaign of intimidation, vandalism, and violence on the campuses and streets of America.

- Celebrating Hamas' mass rape, kidnapping, and murder, they physically blocked Jewish Americans from attending college classes, obstructed synagogues and assaulted worshippers, and vandalized American monuments and statues.
- The Biden Administration turned a blind eye to this coordinated assault on public order; it simply refused to protect the civil rights of Jewish Americans, especially

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Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Takes Forceful and Unprecedented Steps to Combat Anti-Semitism – The White House

students. According to a December 2024 U.S. House of Representatives Staff Report on anti-Semitism, “the failure of our federal government departments and agencies is astounding.”

**PRESIDENT TRUMP KEEPS HIS PROMISES AND BUILDS ON HIS SUCCESS:** In his first term, President Trump kept his biggest promises:

- He moved the American Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem: After decades of broken promises and despite much criticism, President Trump was the President who finally kept his commitment to Israel to move the American embassy from Tel-Aviv to Israel’s true and rightful capital: Jerusalem.
- He established the Abraham Accords: President Trump delivered the greatest breakthrough for peace in the Middle East in decades by brokering the normalization of ties between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco, protecting Israel and Jews and spreading security and prosperity to the entire region.

Now, President Trump has promised that the Federal Government will:

- Protect the civil rights of our Jewish citizens: “My promise to Jewish Americans is this: With your vote, I will be your defender, your protector, and I will be the best friend Jewish Americans have ever had in the White House.”
- Aggressively enforce the law, protect public order, and prosecute anti-Semitic crimes: “I will issue clear orders to my Attorney General to aggressively prosecute terroristic threats, arson, vandalism and violence against American Jews.”
- Deport Hamas Sympathizers and Revoke Student Visas: “To all the resident aliens who joined in the pro-jihadist protests, we put you on notice: come 2025, we will find you, and we will deport you. I will also quickly cancel the student visas of all Hamas sympathizers on college campuses, which have been infested with radicalism like never before.”

NEWS

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